Tamil TIMES

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– Voltaire

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THONDAMAN'S PEACE MOVES

For many years the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka proved incapable of resolution until the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 1987. Despite its obvious flaws, many people believed that it provided a framework for a reasonable settlement. But it was not to be. A lack of good faith and commitment on the part of the government to the process of effective and timely devolution of powers to the Northeast Provincial council established under the Agreement, the acts of commission and omission on the part of the Tamil groups which headed the Provincial Council, the successful efforts on the part of the LTTE to sabotage the proper functioning of the provincial administration, and the coming into power of Ranasinghe Premadasa as President combined to render impossible any lasting solution within the framework of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement.

The 'patriotic alliance' forged between Premadasa and the LTTE ensured the eventual departure of what was described as the 'foreign occupying force', the Indian Peace Keeping Force, which had arrived in the island at the invitation of the then President for the ostensible purpose of enforcing the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement. The Premadasa government and the LTTE leadership negotiated for thirteen long months during which the LTTE assumed virtual physical control of the northeast. Very little is known as to what both parties discussed all these months. By any calculation thirteen months is a long time. One would have thought that both parties to this 'patriotic alliance', having rejected the framework of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, would have proceeded to set out each other's proposals and discuss the prospects of any eventual solution. But what in fact happened was that neither party put forward any set of proposals nor was there any discussion towards a lasting solution. President Premadasa is now saying that he is prepared to concede 'everything' (ellam) except Eelam, and the LTTE wants that the Tamil people must be accepted as a separate nation and that the northeast should be treated as their homeland. One is compelled to ask the question as to why they did not discuss these matters during the thirteen months they were negotiating directly. What is tragic is that a historic opportunity was lost.

When war broke out in June 1990 between the LTTE and the government, one side claimed that it was going to be the final war to end all wars to usher in the promised land, and the other side claimed that it was a war to totally eliminate and wipe out the menace of the LTTE. But these conflicting claims have proved unattainable so far and the war has continued ever since causing unprecedented death and destruction particularly in the northeast of the island where life has become an impossible nightmare. With the fall of the Jaffna Fort and Mankulam army camps, declarations that Eelam was round the corner were to be heard among LTTE enthusiasts. After government forces succeeded in resisting the LTTE onslaught on the Elephant Pass camp and following the recent limited success in the military operations against LTTE bases in the Mullaitivu district, the hawkish sections in Colombo dream about a total victory over the LTTE. Both sides are making preparations for further battles. However, the majority of the people believe that a military victory of one side over the other is an impossible proposition. But so long as the war continues it is the ordinary civilian population that is called upon to pay the price.

Contrary to avowed denials, reliable evidence suggests that the government and the LTTE have been in 'contact' with each other for some time. In April-May this year, it would seem that there were talks on a stage by stage negotiating process to be completed within one hundred days. But the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi and its adverse repercussions prevented further progress in that effort. Then there was the proposal for the appointment of an all-party parliamentary select committee to discuss and evolve a settlement of the national question. Even this effort was stalled with the constitutional and political crisis that was created by the attempted impeachment of President Premadasa. Now that crisis would appear to have been resolved, focus has shifted on the peace moves initiated by Cabinet Minister, S. Thondaman who wields immense influence over President Premadasa and his government. A highly experienced and practical politician, and devoid of the disadvantage of any entrenched ideological predispositions, Mr. Thondaman approaches problems with a combined sense of pragmatism and realism. His committed entry into the peace process is a welcome development. He is reported to have sent a twelve-page document to the LTTE setting out his proposals for negotiations. In the context of the enormous intolerable suffering and hardship faced by the people resulting from the continuation of the present war, it is hoped that the LTTE will seize the opportunity of this initiative and respond positively.

Premadasa survives impeachment

Rita Sebastian from Colombo

Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa staved off a major threat to his leadership when Speaker of the House, M.H. Mohamed, ruled the impeachment resolution slapped on the President by ruling party dissidents and opposition groups invalid.

For the opposition who were confident that they had the President firmly nailed by the resolution, the Speaker's ruling came as a surprise. Mohamed known for his impartiality as Speaker, who first entertained the resolution as having met the requirements under provision 38 of the constitution, did after weeks of silence announce that he was looking into oral and written submissions by some ruling party Members of Parliament who alleged that their signatures had been obtained by misrepresentation. It was the first hint that the Speaker's ruling would not be what the opposition expected.

It is a very unhappy opposition that brought in a motion of no-confidence against the Speaker which failed to get support.

Meanwhile, the surprise return of EROS member Edward Sebastianpillai, with five others, some of them of doubtful political identity, to parliament from the northern Jaffna district has caused considerable alarm not only among southern political parties, but among Tamil groups as well.

In the island's uncertain political scenario, there appeared to be a calculated move by the government to woo as many opposition groups as possible to get its majority in parliament. It is in this context that Sebastianpillai's arrival in Colombo took on special significance.

He arrived in a vessel chartered by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and was quickly whisked off to an unknown destination. Nobody had any doubts that Sebastianpillai came to Colombo with the blessings of the Tigers and mandated to do their bidding. A meeting with President Premadasa followed and six MPs were named.

Speculation was rife that some deal had been struck with the Tigers. And co-incidentally the army suspended a major battle with the Tigers in the Mullaitivu jungles after 29 days of fierce fighting and many lives lost on both sides.

The Defence Ministry came up with a quick denial. The northeast war had not been called off, it said. The troops had returned to barracks it said after having successfully accomplished a search and destroy mission of 'Michael camp', the main logistics base of the Tigers. Political analysts are however quick to point out that President Premadasa's political survival depends not only on the support he can muster among the opposition groups that have not been signatories to either the no-confidence or impeachment motions, but more important retaining the support of his own party men, vigorously wooed by the UNP dissidents and opposition groups who would like to see President Premadasa step down.

The President is walking a tight rope having to prove to his own men that there has been no complicity with the Tigers, who he himself has accused of having 'treacherously betrayed' him after 13 months of a peace dialogue.

The Eelavar Democratic Front (the political wing of EROS) contested the 1989 General Elections as an independent group, since at the time of the elections they were not registered as a political party. Nine MPs were returned to parliament from the northern Jaffna district, three from the east, and won an additional bonus seat.

It was Sebastianpillai who led the group of nine from the north. When fresh hostilities broke out between the Tigers and the government in June 1990, EDF members in protest at what they described as the tremendous hardships heaped on the civilian population in the northeast resigned their seats in parliament.

The then General Secretary of EROS, Vellupillai Balakumar returned to Jaffna and inevitably EROS split into two groups.

Although EROS on several occasions vehemently denied being a close ally of the Tigers, subsequent events proved otherwise. The Tigers always wanted EROS to be not only supportive of them, but subordinate to them as well. Balakumar was forced to comply and several EROS cadres defected to the Tigers. The other faction led by Shankar Rajee remained independent, aligned themselves to the Government, and tread cautiously.

The return of Sebastianpillai and his men, which includes former Jaffna Municipal Commissioner S.K. Sivagnanam who was the Tiger nominee for the post of Administrator-in-Council in the interim administration for the northeast envisaged under the Indo-Lanka Accord following the peace pact in July 1987, has made it blatantly clear as to whom the new MPs owe their allegiance.

What seems strange is that only a fortnight earlier the Tigers from their international Secretariat, appealed to their 'Sinhala brethren' to join them in overthrowing the 'tyrannical and fascist regime' of Premadasa. The state media curiously gave wide coverage to the Tiger appeal. But what is distressing is that both ruling party dissidents and opposition groups, who secretly and cleverly manoeuvred an impeachment resolution against President Premadasa, for the explicit purpose of doing away with the executive presidency and returning the country to the earlier system of parliamentary democracy have forgotten the main issues. Instead the arming of the Tigers by President Premadasa during the peace dialogue is being exploited to the maximum to appeal to the southern constituency. It has already begun to have racial overtones and could in both the short and long term disturb ethnic relations in the country.

Another dimension to the whole issue is the India factor. Sri Lanka, well on the way to mending fences with India after the visit of former External Affairs Minister V.C. Shukla to Colombo early this year, could well see a return to the 'cold war'.

Already there are vague hints that Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao may not come to Colombo for the SAARC summit in November. India has taken strong exception to the allegation that Premadasa armed the Tigers when the Indo-Lanka Accord was very much in place and Indian troops were engaged in disarming the Tigers.

The government position that the Tigers were armed to fight the Tamil National Army in the northeast that was threatening the Sinhala villages on the border has failed as an explanation. If Narasimha Rao keeps out of SAARC it could worsen Indo-Lanka relations specially when one of the chief dissidents, Gamini Dissanayake is perceived as a favourite of the Indian establishment and it could be construed as a slap for the Premadasa government.

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Peace Moves Ahead

Cabinet Minister S. Thondaman has been invited by the LTTE to visit Jaffna and a letter to this effect had been sent to the Minister by Mahendirarajah, alias Mahathaya, one of the top leaders of the LTTE, apparently in response to a previous set of proposals sent by the Minister to the LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran through the ICRC.

Mr. Thondaman made it clear that the package of proposals which he had sent to the LTTE leader came from him as President of the Ceylon Workers Congress and not as a cabinet minister.

Previously LTTE's chief spokesman Anton Balasingham had told some foreign journalists that they were prepared to accept Minister Thondaman to play the role of a mediator between the government and the LTTE.

Mr. Thondaman in a press interview on 22 September said that the LTTE leader had been given two more weeks to respond to what he described as his final peace initiative under which the LTTE was given an option to come to a settlement without laying down arms. He said that the proposals are based on the policy of the CWC and the wishes of the Tamil population who wanted an early settlement to the continuing conflict. Adding that the conditions contained in the proposal were only known to him and Prabhakaran, the Minister said, 'I have drafted these proposals through 50 years of experience and I hope Prabhakaran will respond to it'.

Mr. Thondaman explained why he believed the LTTE could not be asked to lay down arms. 'Prabhakaran depends entirely on his weapons. The moment he lays down arms, he becomes a zero. If we cannot meet his demands, we must at least go part of his way. He will by now know what the Tamils want and it is up to him to make a positive response. Then only we can move on'.

In another reported interview on 27 September, Mr. Thondaman said that the letter of invitation to him to go to Jaffna from Mr. Mahendirarajah of the LTTE was not a satisfactory response to take the matter further. It is learnt that Mr. Thondaman's proposals were contained in a 12-page document whereas the response from the LTTE was a one-page letter inviting him for talks in Jaffna.

Saying that he was not aware of any suspension of military operations against the LTTE, the Minister said that a ceasefire was not a necessary precondition for talks to begin. Military operations could continue while talks were being held because of previous experience where allegations were made that ceasefire periods had held militants to regroup and strengthen their position.

The Minister said that he was committed to bringing about a solution and would work towards that objective irrespective of the LTTE leader's predispositions, whether they are genuine or not. He had written another letter to Prabhakaran which he had despatched through the ICRC calling for a more detailed document on which he could act. 'The ideal time for peace is now at the height of the war where both sides are getting nowhere', he added.

In a recent broadcast on the LTTE's radio service in Jaffna, Tiger chief spokesman Anton Balasingham set out three basic conditions for face-to-face talks with Mr. Thondaman. The conditions were: (1) The government should recognise the homeland of the Tamils; (2) Tamil people should be recognised as a people with a separate nationality; and (3) The self-rule of the Tamils should be recognised.

Tigers on Impeachment

In an open letter to the Sinhala people faxed from the LTTE's international secretariat in London, the LTTE expressed support to the current effort to impeach President R. Premadasa.

'We view the oppressed Sinhala people as our allies and we call upon our Sinhala brothers and sisters to join the struggle against a regime which, in the name of democracy, has been ruthlessly denying every democratic right to the people which it seeks to rule.

'We appeal to all the progressive forces in the Tamil and Sinhala nations to join in the fight to dismantle a fascist and chauvinist regime and pave the way for liberation, true democracy and a free and fruitful association between two free nations'.

The letter adds, 'The government of President Ranasinghe Premadasa seeks to mislead the Sinhala masses into believing that the Tamil national struggle, led by the LTTE is somehow directed against the Sinhala people.

'Nothing can be further from the truth than to suggest that the Tamil national struggle is directed against the Sinhala people. On the contrary, our liberation struggle is the armed struggle of an oppressed people against the tyranny of a regime which has sought to subjugate them. We seek to liberate our homeland from the clutches of the oppressive Sri Lankan state and its army of occupation and we seek to secure our inalienable right to self-determination. We have no hatred towards the Sinhala people. It is one of the fundamental principles of our struggle that we respect and safeguard the rights of every individual, irespective of creed, religion, sex or ethnic origin.

We are opposed to all forms of domination – internal or external. We have already proved our independence by battling with the foreign intruders into our country in the previous two phases of our liberation struggle. The third phase of our struggle will bring victory and the liberation of our nation. We are committed to national liberation and democracy.

Military Offensive Against LTTE Bases

What was described by the security sources as a 'giant drive' involving thousands of troops backed up by attack aircraft and naval gunboats against LTTE bases in the south-west of Mullaitivu is reported to have been halted, according to a report datelined 27 September. However a Defence Ministry release denying that operations against the LTTE had been halted said, 'Operation Lightning had ended as it had achieved its objectives. We have not called off operations but it is true that the fighting had slackened. The reason for it is that the Tigers received such a beating that they will need a long time to regroup and mount a large scale attack'.

When the operation was in full swing with heavy casualties on both sides, Colonel Sarath Munasinghe addressing a press conference in Colombo describing the operation as the 'biggest jungle operation undertaken by the Army', said that the LTTE used the code name 'one four' with reference to their bases in the area because of the existence of 14 bases, including their 'Operational Headquarters' scattered in the dense jungles of Mullaitivu. The LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran had stayed at this Headquarters until the siege of the Elephant Pass Army Camp, the Colonel claimed.

The Colonel said that the LTTE base known as 'Suganthan' had been overrun by government forces and another one known as 'Micheal' base was being attacked by troops. The exact location of the other bases were not known although they knew of their approximate location. Troops were now at Nithikasikulam, a jungle area. Prabhakaran had moved to the 'one four base' on 10 October 1987 when war

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broke out with the IPKF and he had been living there upto the time the Elephant Pass Army Camp came under siege and after that he had moved to Chavakachcheri. This was the operational headquarters of the Tigers and all decisions including the one to launch attacks on the IPKF had been taken by Prabhakaran from this base, the Colonel added.

He said that there was information that there were lathe machines installed in two of the bases to turn out 'Arul' grenades. The extent of the 'Suganthan' camp which was over-run was about three kilometres. This was a vital camp for the LTTE where all advanced training was carried out.

Heavy casualties were reported on both sides and by 14 September the army claimed that LTTE death toll had risen to 469 since Operation Lightning commenced on August 29, and the army death toll was said to be 41 with 66 wounded.

Security forces claimed that more LTTE bases codenamed Micheal, Sathis, Eeshan, Suresh and Kamal were over-run by government forces. The 'Sathis' camp was used as headquarters by the LTTE military leader in charge of the 'one four' bases, Anbu who was killed earlier in the week during the operation. Camp 'Sathis' comprised a large complex with seven factories which were used to manufacture different types of mines, mortar and other weapons by the Tigers. Several lathe machines to turn out ammunition and a large number of fans to cool the LTTE cadres working in the factories were found by the security forces who also recovered two large generators which were used to power the machines. One of them was large enough to provide electricity to an entire village. A massive cement tank filled to the brim with kerosene was also found. An underground tunnel system with some bunkers going down as deep as 20 feet into the ground was found by the soldiers.

The army claimed that on 25 September the biggest base known as Camp Micheal located in the jungles of Welioya was overrun and destroyed by government forces after fierce battles with the LTTE. On reaching the camp, the forces are reported to have found a fuel storage facility, ammunition dumps, a barber shop, a number of strong rooms and cache of arms of all kinds. They also found and destroyed a thousand meter long complex of underground tunnels and a large number of concrete bunkers.

Amnesty International Extends Mandate

Tokyo, 8 September – The London based international human rights organisation Amnesty International, which has been regarded as a scourge of those governments responsible for grave human rights abuses, is to extend its mandate to cover violations and abuses committed by non-state opposition groups and movements.

Hitherto, AI's mandate was restricted to dealing with violations committed by the State and its enforcement agencies. The extension of the mandate is said to reflect AI's recognition that there are in existence in various countries powerful groups and movements outside the control of governments which engage in serious violations of human rights.

In a statement issued on 7 September after a week-long meeting of its governing council at Yokohama in Japan, Amnesty International said it hoped that this change to its mandate would help thousands of victims of abuse every year.

'We continue to hold governments directly responsible for the protection of human rights under international law and violations by governments will remain the focus of our work. But we must confront the atrocities committed by groups like the LTTE, Tamil Tigers, in Sri Lanka and Sandero Luminoso (maoist "Shining Path" guerrillas) in Peru', the statement said.

The statement added that just as the AI did neither support nor oppose any government, it took no position on the resort to force by opposition groups or on their political agendas. 'Our sole concern is a humanitarian one – we are concerned about the victims'.

The Council meeting bringing together representatives of 70 countries stressed AI's core mission to seek the release of prisoners of conscience, to work for fair trials for political prisoners and to end torture and summary executions. In future the organisation would target abuses committed by armed opposition groups in countries like Sri Lanka, Peru, Philippines, Turkey and some Middle-Eastern countries.

India Spent Rs.380 Million on Tamil Refugees

NEW DELHI.

India has spent over Rs.380 million on providing relief to Sri Lankan Tamil refugees, living in this country since July 1983.

This has been stated in the Home Ministry's Annual Report for 1990-91.

The report says that there are 210,944 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees living here as of March 31 this year. Of these, 115,792 are staying in various camps in the southern Indian State of Tamilnadu, which is separated from Sri Lanka by the narrow Palk Straits.

During the first phase of immigration between July 24, 1983 and November 30, 1987, 134,053 refugees arrived from the island nation.

The exodus began in July 1983 in the wake of the anti-Tamil riots that rocked the island. A large number of Tamils fled the Jaffna peninsula in late 1987 when an armed conflict began there between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF).

Of the Phase One arrivals, 19,581 refugees went back to Sri Lanka on their own. Following the signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement on July 29, 1987, the process of organised repatriation was begun on December 24, 1987. Fifty batches comprising 25,585 refugees were taken back to the island in course of the next 15 months.

As a result of renewed violence that ravaged the Jaffna peninsula thereafter 122,064 refugees came from the island between August 26, 1989 and March 31, 1990. Of the Phase Two arrivals, 115,240 refugees were accommodated at the two permanent camps at Mandapam and Kottapattu and in temporary relief camps spread over 18 districts in Tamil Nadu.

Last year 1,614 refugees were put up in camps in Malkangiri sub-division of Koraput District in the eastern Indian state of Orissa. However, many of them disappeared from here and went back to Tamil Nadu. In March this year, there were only 218 refugees left in the Orissa refugee camps.

While the Government of India bears the entire cost on relief and accommodation it is the State governments which function as the implementing agencies.

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CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS IN SRI LANKA

The means are more important than the end

– Dr. Radhika Coomaraswamy –

Dr. Radhika Cooomaraswamy

In 1972 and 1978, the country was railroaded into adopting constitutions passed by large parliamentary majorities.

Today, there is another attempt to railroad the country out of one Constitution and into another. What the drafters of past Constitutions and detractors of the present Constitution appear to share in common is a contempt for an open, deliberate, non vituperative, consultative process involving all sections of the population. Constitutions of Sri Lanka have often been used as instruments for political one-upmanship. Nothing illustrates this more than the last few weeks where both sides have discovered provisions of the Constitution in a battle of surprises involving lawyers and legal provisions. And yet, the Constitution is the fundamental law of the land, a social consensus, setting out permanent principles which should govern our national life.

In the hurly burly of the last few weeks, we are forgetting that it is the Constitution of the land that we are trying to interpret, and the elected President of the country that we are trying to impeach. Is it possible to make such monumental decisions about constitutional matters, when those who signed important motions are not sure that they have actually signed? When the elected representatives of the people, accountable to the people, call for a secret ballot so that no-one will know how they vote on the most important political issue of our times? When the speaker does not place the motion on the Order Book for at least forty-eight hours and conjecture and rumour takes the place of public notice about who is impeaching the President and why? And finally, before the public can catch its breath, Parliament is prorogued by the President leaving the entire country in a state of deep insecurity. Impeachment and constitutional amendments require a fair and reasoned process. One can surely ask whether the present climate is conducive to any such deliberations.

The question of impeachment has become intricately linked with the political survival of three of Sri Lanka's leading political personalities. In this clash of the titans, as emotions begin to ebb and flow, both sides have begun to make propositions which serve the political exigencies of the moment but which will only fuel anti-democratic aspects of our political life. Those of us who are committed to the democratic process must resist the threat that is often thrown in our direction, 'you are either with us or against us', and try and separate the wheat from the chaff. What aspects of this process need strengthening and what need revision?

Let us begin with the President. It may be said that the root cause of the present crisis is the perceived Bonapartist style of the present executive President. Bonapartism is the term used for a head of state who cultivates a separate and personal political base independent of the party. The Bonapartist leader is usually driven by a populist vision of a special destiny to uplift 'the people'. Bonapartism also implies a style of government which does not fully respect the autonomy of intermediary institutional forms, whether it be the cabinet, parliament, the bureaucracy etc., which are expected to conform and not hinder the political vision. The personality of the individual president triumphs over other interests in these institutions as a matter of fiat. It could be argued that the last President also exercised this style of government – witness the referendum of 1982 – but because of his age and his personal style, he appears to have gotten away with it.

The revolt of the parliamentarians is therefore a challenge to this perceived Bonapartist style of the President. His response to the crisis, however, has not been one of generosity – instead, he has become even more Bonapartist – proroguing parliament, expelling the UNP dissident members, conveying the Attorney-General's opinion on dissolution. There was an alternate approach available to the President where he would take stock of the revolt and set in motion an internal conciliation process – perhaps setting a committee within his own party to look into grievances and honestly confronting some of the problems faced by his legislators. In the last few days there have been attempts to remedy this situation especially at the group meeting of the 18th. It remains to be seen whether this will result in success.

A Bonapartist style alone is not enough for impeachment. The style of the President must be tested either at a general election or a presidential election – that is the more appropriate and democratic way of removing an elected President. But it is alleged that the President has also committed some acts which violate section 70 of the Constitution and therefore he is subject to impeachment. The case is yet to be heard for any final judgement, but in the present rush to impeach the President and strengthen parliamentary democracy, it is necessary that we do not become accessories to certain anti-democratic motivations and practices which will create unhealthy precedents. It may be a plea that will fal on deaf ears but for the first time in ou post-colonial history, let us try and dc things the correct way.

Though the general call for strengthening the institution of Parliament is a healthy one, there are certain aspects of the rebel conspiracy which are very disturbing. Let me enumerate a few:-

In many newspaper articles and in press conferences, the rebels have argued that they had to move this motion because the President was contemplating dissolving parliament. If this is true then it is an unhealthy way to approach impeachment. It is also said that if a 2/3 majority is not received, the rebels and the opposition will move a no-confidence motion on the government, let the government fall and then replace the government with a coalition majority.

Impeachment is a personal accusation levelled at the President. It is not a substitute for the will of the people. It cannot and should not be used either to avoid general elections or to change governments without consulting the people. To do so is to make impeachment an anti-democratic device.

The rebels and the joint opposition are calling for a secret ballot when the impeachment motion comes before parliament. Their argument is that the special circumstances of intimidation require such an action. They also argue that if the public can vote in

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secret, why can't their representatives also vote in secret. Parliamentarians having to choose among themselves to replace a vacancy such as the Speaker is very different to parliamentarians acting in the public interest. To ask for a secret ballot in this context is a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature and role of the elected representative.

In Sri Lanka where MPs have long been associated with chits, jobs, and patronage, it may be easy to forget that the legislator's main task is to take a stand on pieces of legislation. His action with regard to these pieces of legislation is the basis on which he is judged, the basis for his re-election. The public has the right to know how its representatives vote on matters of public importance. It is argued by some that there is a climate of fear and intimidation. That was the case in the Philippines and Bangladesh but no-one asked for secrecy. It seems that anonymous letters and secret ballots are peculiarly a Sri Lankan style of rebellion. It is not a healthy style for any demoratic system. In honesty we must also ask ourelves, whether this call for a secret ballot is really a question of fear or a question of having your cake and eating it too. Governments may rise and governments may fall but the MP wants to have the same privileges. This is an extraordinary state of affairs. One finds it quite strange that many leading personalities are asking the Speaker and Supreme Court to pander to these instincts – some of the worst side effects of our democratic practice.

Impeachment cannot and should not be a quick fix. If you are moving against the elected representative of the people whether it be the President or a member of parliament, there must be a fair, deliberate and open process. One cannot hand in a motion for impeachment on Thursday and impeach a man on the following Tuesday. The problem here does not lie with the rebel construction of their cause but with our Constitution. On the one hand, the threat of dissolution hangs like the Sword of Damocles before any impeachment motion. On the other hand, the Speaker can entertain an impeachment motion and never place it on the Order Book, holding the President to ransom. Neither of these situations is healthy for democratic decision-making.

The reason for this peculiar stalemate is that we have tried to graft a presidential system onto a Westminster model while our thinking remains Westminster. When judges and Presidents are impeached in the U.S. and this is a very rare occurence, a select Committee of the House of Representatives first sits as a grand jury, listens to the evidence from all quarters and then only decides on whether to indict the President for impeachment. This process can take up to six months. It is quite different to our reality of writing a resolution surreptitiously and then gaining signatures. Indictment in the U.S. is an open, consultative process involving both sides of the house.

Once the House Judiciary Committee indicts the President, then the setting moves to the Senate where the impeachment proceedings begin. Again, it is a very open process with the right to summon witnesses and listen to the general public. The Senate sits as a judicial body and party differences are supposed to give way to the impartial examination of fact. This process may take another six months or so. If the evidence is very strong as in the case of Nixon, the President usually resigns. The long process also allows the system to adjust to new realities and new power blocs. In the two hundred years of U.S. history there have been only two impeachment proceedings and none have reached their finality, i.e. the removal of the President by Congress

It is very obvious from the above, that our Constitution does not provide for the kind of process which will make impeachment a judicial and not a political issue. Given this lacuna, the present impeachment can appear as an overt political coup by partisan interests. The rebels may not have had another choice but it is important that if this motion does go through that the semblance of the type of open judicial process involved in the U.S. is reproduced. Otherwise, it will always have the touch of illegitimacy and given the social and class differences among the main contenders, this illegitimacy will be mobilised in the future to prove that the common man does not have a chance. That is the political repercussion that all sides must seek to avoid.

All that any citizen in this country can ask for is an open, deliberate and consultative process with regard to constitutional decision-making. If the President dissolves Parliament then it is important to go to the people in a general election and canvas their support. If the people feel he should not be impeached then their will should prevail. If he does not dissolve parliament then there should be patience and the political and judicial process should take their course without the hysteria and glare of media headlines. If the presidential system has to be scrapped, a move that I believe will not be in the best interest of the country since the system has some benefits, or an alternative formulation of presidential power has to be delineated, let that also follow the proper course and involve the fullest debate.

It is time that we go beyond conspiracies and horse deals on both sides and try to interpret or rewrite a constitutional order based on what may serve the national interest and not the political exigencies of the hour. If we can move beyond our venomous, parochial concerns to a concern with the democratic order then this crisis may have possibilities of a more open society. If on the other hand, we allow the venomous and the personal to get the upper hand, then we will only drown in our own slime and it is the democratic system as a whole that will take a bashing. In this climate of fear, apprehension and general mudslinging, we must keep stressing the point that these are monumental questions, that Constitutions should not be trifled with and if all else fails then you must go to the people. For when we come to constitutional issues of such magnitude, the means are, definitely, far more important than the end.

Army Officers Charged With Extortion

Two lieutenants of the Sri Lanka Army and a businessman have been indicted in the Colombo High Court on charges of extorting two million rupees from a Colombo businessman.

They are alleged to have extorted the money by issuing a letter purported to be from the JVP military wing leader, Keerthi Wijebahu, to a wealthy businessman living at Ward Place, Colombo.

Lieutenant Chandana Lal Adhikarinayake and Lieutenant Senaka Haripriya Ananda Silva of the Sri Lanka Army and Slave Island businessman Pilana Withana Arachchige Damitha Mahesh have been indicted on three counts under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the Penal Code.

When the three accused were produced before High Court Judge T.B. Weerasooriya, the counsel for the defence made a request for bail which was objected to by state counsel Ashoka Weerasooriya. Thereupon the judge ordered that the suspects be remanded until the case is taken up again on October 11.

The extortion demand written on a letterhead of the Deshapremi Janatha Sannadhdha Balakaya, the military wing of the JVP, had allegedly been sent to Stanley de Silva of Ward Place, Colombo on August 1, 1991.

The letter is alleged to have carried the message demanding the handing over of two million rupees to a designated representative within 72 hours. Non-compliance or the disclosure of

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People & Politics

★ WHITHER THE UNP REBELS ?

The challenge mounted by the UNP rebel group led by Lalith Athulathmudali and Gamini Dissanayake together with other opposition parties to Premadasa's presidency collapsed and crumbled on the parliamentary floor in three rounds.

Round one: The motion to impeach President Premadasa was expected to be taken up on October 8 when parliament reassembled. But failed to materialise with the announcement the day before by the Speaker of Sri Lanka's parliament of his decision to reject the motion on the ground that it did not bear the required number of valid signatures.

Round two: In an angry reaction to the Speaker's action in rejecting the impeachment motion, the opposition and the UNP rebel group of MPs moved a vote of no-confidence on the Speaker, which was defeated after a heated debate with 123 MPs voting against and 85 voting for. Twelve MPs who voted with the government belonged to the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC), Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) and Eelam Revolutionary Organisation of Students (EROS). The EPRLF MPs voted with the opposition.

Round three: The UNP rebel group and the opposition had tabled a no-confidence motion on the Premadasa government primarily on the question of the alleged supply of arms to the LTTE. The governing party agreed to take up the motion for debate on 9 October. However the movers sought a postponement of the debate till the end of the month which was refused and in the absence of any of the signatories to the motion prepared to move it, the Speaker ruled that he would treat the motion as having lapsed.

It would now seem that not only has Premadasa successfully resisted the challenge to his presidency, but also has demonstrated that there is a sufficient majority in parliament for his government to survive at least for the time being.

Although most of the opposition parties lent their support, it was the UNP rebel MPs, more notably Lalith Athulathmudali and Gamini Dissanayake, who spearheaded the campaign against Premadasa. The serious and the highly personalised nature of allegations made against the President and the much publicised charges and counter-charges traded between both sides during the campaign leave little doubt that the battle will continue to 'expose and destroy' in the coming weeks.

Corruption

Though the campaign commenced with a challenge to the way in which the executive presidency functioned and with a series of allegations of intentional violations of the Constitution by President Premadasa, as the campaign proceeded the focus shifted to the question of supplying arms to the LTTE and issues of corruption and foreign involvement in the plot to oust the President.

At a public meeting, President Premadasa promised that he would soon 'expose the renegades now out to destroy me. Villains smarting from my having foiled their designs for self-aggrandizement have now joined forces with a set of bankrupt opposition politicians to take revenge. I have incurred the hatred of my present enemies by refusing to allow them free rein to indulge in corruption under cover of privileged positions. That is the only wrong I have done. They are backed by certain foreign elements who have an axe to grind.

'Their shady dealings will soon be public knowledge and you will then see them revealed in their true colours'. He said that among the 'villainous rogues' were some who had grabbed acres of land under a crusade of peace. 'One person obtained compensation for a property acquired for a big project and later got that property back without paying a red cent, saying it was not finally required for the project.

Opposition No-Confidence Motion That Failed

WHEREAS the Government of Sri Lanka is bound to take all necessary action to protect the integrity of Sri Lanka; and

WHEREAS the LTTE has been involved in an armed struggle against the Security Forces of Sri Lanka for the purpose of establishing a separate state; and

WHEREAS the Government of Sri Lanka engaged in discussions with the LTTE for over 15 months between March 1989 and June 1990; and

WHEREAS the Government of Sri Lanka has handed over sophisticated weapons including sophisticated guns, ammunition, communication equipment, vehicles, money and cement for the building of bunkers to the LTTE and permitted the LTTE to prepare for war during the said 15 months; and

WHEREAS this House or the majority of Ministers or even the Government Parliamentary Group was not consulted and/or kept informed of the content, progress or the results of the said talks and/or of the handing over of the aforesaid equipment to the LTTE; and

WHEREAS the High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in New Delhi, His Excellency Mr. Neville Kanakaratne, had admitted such handing over of arms; and

WHEREAS this act is well known to Journalists, both Local and Foreign; and

WHEREAS this fact has transpired in the investigations into the murder of Shri Rajiv Gandhi of India; and

WHEREAS all this has been done without properly consulting the majority of Ministers, Parliament or even the Government Parliamentary Group or informing the people of Sri Lanka; and

WHEREAS the aforesaid acts have resulted in the deaths of over 600 Policemen and over 1,500 security personnel at the hands of the LTTE, since 1990; and

WHEREAS the aforesaid weapons and equipment were used to kill hundreds of innocent Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim citizens of Sri Lanka including children and religious functionaries; and

WHEREAS the aforesaid weapons are still being used by the LTTE against the Security Forces and civilians;

THIS PARLIAMENT resolves to dissociate itself from, and condemns the Government for its aforesaid conduct in permitting the LTTE to prepare for war and providing it with arms and equipment as aforesaid without taking into consideration the security and well-being of the citizens and security personnel of this country and states that by this conduct the Government has forfeited the confidence of this Parliament and therefore this Parliament expresses and resolves that the Parliament has no confidence in the Government.

Dated this 25th day of September 1991.

Another person was caught operating a smuggling racket under cover of importing material from Singapore for refugee relief. Yet another 'rogue' was nabbed sending lorry loads of banned items to Jaffna for the use of terrorists. One of them was racketeering in tea exports.

'The assets that a certain person had acquired from 1980 to 1988 have also come to light. I gave them no quarter for such plunder from 1988. No wonder they are sulking and plotting against me'.

The Lake House papers gave wide publicity to a claim by the SLFP MP for Colombo district, C.V. Guneratne in defamation case filed against him by Lalith Athulathmudali that the latter had acquired properties worth Rs.5.25 million between 1981 and 1988 when his monthly salary as Minister was Rs.1500 in 1981 and subsequently raised to Rs.13,500 per month.

In response to charges of alleged corruption, Lalith Athulathmudali in a recent statement said that he welcomed a full inquiry. 'In fact, for over a decade, I have been advocating a permanent Commission of Inquiry into complaints of corruption and abuse of power etc. I have nothing to hide. All my assets, liabilities, purchases and sales of property, bank borrowings etc have been properly declared to the authorities, including the President and the Inland Revenue Department. I had many assets and very successful practice at the Bar before entering Parliament. My sources of income are known.

'On the other hand, persons who have never had a known source of income have managed to purchase palatial property in the most elite addresses in Colombo 7 and elsewhere. Additionally they have sent their children abroad for education, after sending them to International Schools here. Should they not also be investigated? People living in glass houses should not throw stones at us who have built our reputation on rock solidarity'.

The 'Zionist Twins'

President Premadasa accused Israel of complicity in the conspiracy against him. He accused that Israel had plotted with the UNP rebels to oust him because he ordered the closure of the Israeli Interest Section in Colombo. The government controlled Daily Observer (10.9.91) in an editorial denouncing Lalith Athulathmudali and Gamini Dissanayake as 'The Zionist Twins', referred to an alleged 'dramatic confrontation' between Mr. Stephen Solarz, Chairman, Sub-Committee on Asian Affairs, US Congress and President Premadasa at the Presidential Secretariat. According to the editorial, the Congressman had come to Colombo to put maximum pressure and bully the President into keeping the Israeli Interests Section with threats of cutting off vital US aid to Sri Lanka if the Section was closed, but the President 'stood his ground and refused to let the mighty Mr. Solarz bully him. . .These two leading advocates (Lalith and Gamini) of the Israel lobby were powerless to help their friends and allies when President Premadasa told Mr. Solarz that he was going to dismantle the Israeli tent built by the Zionist twins'.

In his address to the reassembled Parliament on 24 September, the President said, 'You know that immediately after the sending back of the IPKF, I had the Israeli Interests Section removed. In such a context there is nothing to be surprised about the Mossad rising up against me. Please remember that there are among us traitors who have gone to Israel Universities and lectured there and earned dirty money. Don't forget that for a moment. Don't forget that Israelis were even traitorously brought into the Mahaveli Scheme. I would like to tell you that such persons are today acting as agents of the Mossad'.

Although the President has repeated the allegations against Israel, the Sri Lankan government has already begun to distance itself from the aspersions cast against Congressman Solarz, the influential Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Asian Pacific Affairs. The Foreign Ministry is reported to have already indicated to the US Ambassador in Colombo that the views expressed in the state-owned newspapers were not those of the government. The backtracking by Colombo is attributed to a letter written by the Sri Lankan Ambassador in Washington, Stanley Kalpage, to Foreign Secretary, Bernard Tillakaratne which warned that the adverse comments about Mr. Solarz would have the result of seriously affecting Sri Lanka's relations with the USA.

The UNP rebels have been expelled from the party. What will happen next? The examples of the fate that befell Cyril Mathew and Ronnie de Mel spring to mind. In late 1984, Cyril Mathew, the then Minister of Industries and long time friend of the former President J.R. Jayawardene, went public against the latter for having agreed to the 'Annexure C' proposal for the settlement of the ethnic conflict put forward by G. Parthasarathy, the Indian PM's special envoy. Mr. Mathew was promptly sacked from the Cabinet, and within a few months parliament was presented with comprehensive details of his financial skulduggery through the medium of then Finance Minister, Ronnie de Mel. A sad Mr. Mathew was sent into political wilderness. Ronnie de Mel, who has the record of having been Finance Minister for over nine years, resigned from the UNP and crossed over to the SLFP to support Mrs. S. Bandaranaike against Mr. Premadasa during the 1989 presidential election. When Premadasa emerged victorious, details of alleged financial wrongdoing by Ronnie de Mel were given much publicity and criminal proceedings were instituted against him. The unfortunate Ronnie went into exile and is reported to be living abroad.

★ EROS IN THE LIMELIGHT

In February 1989, the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation of Students (EROS), one of the oldest among Tamil militant groups, surprised many when it won 13 parliamentary seats, nine of whom were elected from the Jaffna district. The LTTE, engaged in bitter battle with the IPKF in the northeast of Sri Lanka, called for a boycott of the elections. But when it became evident that elections would take place and the people would vote with the IPKF providing the security, to prevent its rivals like the EPRLF walking away with all the seats, permitted EROS, which was then an ally of the LTTE, to participate in the elections.

Despite the fact that EROS was prepared to play a subservient role to the LTTE, the success at the elections enhanced the political profile of EROS as a separate entity. To the LTTE, which laid claim to be the 'sole representatives of the Tamils', this was an unwelcome development. It forcibly 'disarmed' the EROS cadres and appropriated their weapons. Then after the war broke out between the LTTE and government forces in June 1990, EROS MPs were compelled to resign some of whom went abroad to seek political asylum. In the succeeding months, it was announced that EROS had been dissolved and that its General Secretary V. Balakumar and some other leading members had joined the LTTE. However, other members of EROS, led by Shankar Raji, a founder and Central Committee member of EROS, continued to assert their separate existence and let it be known that Balakumar was being forcibly restrained in Jaffna by the LTTE.

By January 1991, Shankar Raji and his colleagues decided that EROS should re-enter parliament and Basheer Cegu Dawood from Batticaloa took oaths as an MP. But there was an insurmountable difficulty in getting those elected from Jaffna to be renominated because the leader of the Jaffna group, Mr. Edward Sebastiampillai, whose signature was needed for the purpose, was in Jaffna and the LTTE would not let him.

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'We are progressing towards our objective'

– LTTE Leader – V. Prabhakaran –

Interview with Velupillai Prabhakaran, LTTE Leader, conducted by BBC Colombo Correspondent, Chris Morris, recorded in Jaffna on 1st September 1991, with translation from Tamil to English by LTTE political advisor, Anton Balasingham.

Q: First of all I'd like to ask you about the general military situation since the war against Sri Lankan forces broke out again in June 1990. Taking the eastern province first, how are things going there?

A: The situation in the eastern province is very complex, because in this region different communities – Tamils, Muslims and the Sinhalese people – are living together. And there are Sinhalese settlements in the Trincomalee and Amparai districts, and the government has put up several army camps to protect these settlements and they've also installed several army camps along the coastal belt. Even though there is a concentration of troops in the eastern province, one cannot say that it is under the control of the Sri Lankan government. Our military offensive activities are continuing there and there is a free mobility of our troops and cadres moving in various places. Villages and jungle areas of the eastern province are still under our control. Therefore the claim that the government has total control over the eastern province is untenable.

Q: But isn't it fair to say that you are in a much worse position in the east now than you were before June 1990?

A: The assumption that the eastern province was under the control of the LTTE before the resumption of hostilities last year was incorrect. Because for a long time before the outbreak of hostilities the eastern province was under the control of the IPKF. And Sri Lankan army camps were functioning there. When the IPKF left the eastern province the Sri Lankan army camps and the police stations were still functioning there. Therefore the assumption that the eastern province was under the total control of the LTTE prior to the war is incorrect.

Elephant Pass

Q: In the north you still control most of the territory. Are you pleased with the way the war has gone there?

A: It is true that the LTTE controls large areas of territory in the northern province. We were able to destroy several important army camps during the war last year. Army camps at Kokkavil, Jaffna Fort, and Mankulam were destroyed and large areas came under our control. We can say that the military offensive operations by us in the last year have been satisfactory, and it has also given us new military experience.

Q: Nevertheless the army is claiming a major victory in the recent battle at Elephant Pass. Do you consider that that was a strategic mistake on your part?

A: The claim of a massive victory at Elephant Pass by the Sri Lankan government is simply a propaganda ploy. When we launched an offensive against the Elephant Pass army camp the camp was at the point of being over-run by the LTTE. There were eight hundred soldiers trapped inside the army base. To rescue these trapped soldiers Sri Lanka had to send in reinforcements. A massive force of eight thousand troops was deployed for the rescue operation. And in the battle that ensued the army has suffered heavy casualties, and it has taken nearly twenty four days for the army to advance some five kilometres. I don't think this can be characterised as a great military victory. In this war at Elephant Pass we have demonstrated that we can face a conventional army face to face, and this has shown a new phase in our development.

Conventional army

Q: Can you tell me something more about your moves to try to expand into a conventional army. How important is that for your military development?

A: Our armed struggle against the Sri Lankan state has a history stretching back fifteen years. During this period of history, we have evolved into a huge military force. We have been conducting a guerrilla type of warfare, and now we are transforming ourselves into a conventional type of military structure. This clearly indicates a massive development militarily, and it's a significant turning point in the history of our struggle. The Sri Lankan government has to learn a lesson with regard to the development of the LTTE. The lesson is that the Sri Lankan government will never resolve the Tamil issue by opting for a military solution.

Q: As the size of your military force expands, there has been great criticism of the young age at which you enrol boys and girls into the LTTE. Why do you take people in when they are so young, and when do they become part of your actual fighting force?

A: We have never forcefully conscripted anybody into the movement. It is true that young people join our movement. It is because of the consequence of the worst form of state oppression. It is also because the society is faced with innumerable social problems. There have been occasions at which parents have brought their children and handed them over to us at public platforms. And we provide education facilities for the children, we have helped them with technical education, and we have instituted several projects and programmes for their educational development. But as some people allege, we have never sent these very young people to the battle front.

Problems with India

Q: Turning to your relations with India. They are particularly bad at the moment. Does that worry you?

A: Our organisation has had problems with India for quite a long time. The government of India intervened in the Tamil problem in 1983 and provided military assistance to various Tamil groups and created new Tamil militant organisations. In 1987 the government of India entered into agreement with Sri Lanka and imposed a solution on our people. We were opposed to the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement, and as a consequence the war broke out between India and the LTTE. So for a long time India was acting on its own national interest, but we were upholding the interests of our people. As a consequence there have been contradictions between the LTTE and the government of India. The present hostility is a product of this long historical bitterness. Therefore we are really concerned and to some extent disappointed over the approach of the Indian government.

Q: Can you tell me more specifically about the clampdown on your activities in Tamil Nadu. What has been the worst aspect of that clampdown on your fight in Sri Lanka?

A: For a long time the LTTE have been used as pawns in the political chess game in Tamil Nadu. The government of India as well as the Tamil Nadu state government have been making calculated efforts to turn the Tamil Nadu people against our struggle. Deliberate attempts are being made to undermine the image of our organisation. But we can say confidently that there are vast sections of the people in Tamil Nadu who support the Tiger movement and the legitimate cause for which we are fighting.

As long as there is this continuing support I don't think our struggle will be in any way affected.

Rajiv's murder

Q: Now I know you have denied any involvement in the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. But the Indian investigators are convinced that you were responsible. In another development, your representative in London, Kittu, has been expelled by the British government. Aren't you concerned that international opinion is turning totally against you?

A: Our movement is not in any way involved in the killing of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. So far this accusation has not been corroborated. It is true that the government of India has been engaged in a massive disinformation campaign against our movement, based on this false accusation. As far as Kittu's matter is concerned, our people are deeply disappointed about the action taken against Mr. Kittu. Kittu was sent to London for medical treatment with the permission of the British High Commission. Kittu is a handicapped person and an authentic representative of our people. Having full knowledge of Kittu's case, the decision by the government of Great Britain to expel him is unfortunate and we consider this action as irresponsible and inhuman.

Q: Your critics in Sri Lanka say that despite the formation of your political wing, the LTTE is primarily a ruthless military organisation. Can you hope to play any political role in the future?

A: We have a political wing, it is a massive political structure, which has been involved in a variety of activities. In particular the political organisation runs our civil administration in the north and east. They are involved in food production, they are involved in relief and rehabilitation work, social services and the political organisation is also looking after the problem of the refugees. In every aspect, in all facets of social life, our political organisation is deeply involved. So the accusation that we don't have a political structure, and we are simply a military organisation, is untrue.

Q: Can you comment on the current situation in Colombo, where President Premadasa appears to be facing a threat to his rule. Do you think the confusion in Colombo will have any effect on the ethnic conflict?

A: We are observing the situation very carefully, and it is premature on our part to make any public comments at this stage.

Talks with Govt.

Q: There have been various attempts in the last few months to reopen some form of dialogue between the government and the LTTE. What do you think are the chances of anything along those lines succeeding in the coming months?

A: We have always been prepared for peaceful negotiations. But we have always insisted, and continue to insist, that there should be talks without conditions.

Q: In a broader sense, in your personal opinion, do you think there is a chance for Tamils and Sinhalese to coexist peacefully in the future within a united Sri Lanka?

A: It is up to the Sinhalese people and the Sinhalese politicians to determine whether we can live in this island peacefully as one people. As far as we are concerned the Sinhalese people should first of all recognise the very basis of the Tamil national question. In other words, the Tamil homeland, the Tamil nationality and the right of our people to self-determination. If these basic principles are recognised, then there is a possibility for unity between the Tamil and Sinhalese people.

Q: Can I ask you one question about yourself. There's a mystique grown up around you, and people say you are extremely secretive. Can you tell me why you are so secretive, and why you so rarely appear in public?

A: This is an entirely wrong characterisation of my personality. It is true that I avoid public meetings, but in my day-to-day life I meet a lot of people, I address various seminars and I regularly meet a lot of people. So this assumption that I am alienated from the people is totally wrong.

Q: Finally can you tell me what you have achieved by the last fifteen months of war. Thousands of Tamils and thousands of Sinhalese have been killed. What has the LTTE actually achieved as a result?

A: As a consequence of these fifteen months of war, we have impressed upon the government of Sri Lanka, that they cannot impose a military solution on our problem.

Q: And what about the future?

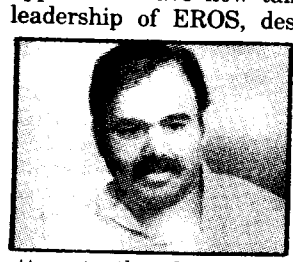
A: We sincerely feel that we are progressing towards the objective for which we have been fighting.

Continued from page 11

During the last few months, the presence of Shankar Raji in Colombo was much in evidence contacting the President, his Special Advisor Bradman Weerakoon and the Commissioner of Elections to find ways and means for EROS to enable its MPs to re-enter parliament.

The absence of the 13 EROS MPs was never felt in Parliament nor was the significance of their potential presence noticed until the recent motion to impeach the President was submitted. If the 13 vacancies were duly filled, their votes would have become crucial to the outcome of the impeachment move. It was in this backdrop that the arrival in Colombo on 26 September of three persons claiming to represent EROS raised much public attention and media speculation. The three who arrived by a special ICRC ship from Jaffna were Edward Sebastiampillai, Kanapathi Selvanayagam and C.V.K. Sivagnanam. The first two functioned as EROS MPs until July 1990 when they resigned. Mr. Sivagnanam, a former Commissioner of the Jaffna Municipal Council, was one of the members nominated by the LTTE in September 1987 to the ill-fated Interim Administrative Council envisaged under the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of that year.

According to Shankar Raji, who appears to have now taken over the leadership of EROS, despite several



Shankar Raji, C.C. member

attempts the three persons who arrived in Colombo had avoided meeting him or his other colleagues, but met the President and the Commissioner of Elections. Mr. Edward Sebastiampillai, claiming to represent EROS (which contested the last elections as an independent group) had submitted the names of six persons with an certificate from the Government Agent of Jaffna, and by gazette notification the Commissioner of Elections declared the six to be MPs – Edward Sebastiampillai, Kanapathi Selvanayagam, C.V. Kandiah Sivagnanam, Vaikasi Subramaniam, Vaithilingam Sellathambi, and Velupillai Sivanadiyar.

Shankar Raji was surprised that the vacancies for the Jaffna electoral district had been suddenly filled by persons who to his knowledge could not be identified as EROS members. 'The group leader of the Jaffna district Edward Sebastiampillai was earlier identified with the group but not any more. In fact, we are yet to meet him despite several attempts to do so. As for the other five members, they were never members of the EROS'.

Their direct negotiations with the President, the presumed fact that they had arrived with the approval of the LTTE and their refusal to meet the EROS leaders in Colombo added to the mystery of the appearance of the three-man group from Jaffna. It was speculated that they had been sent by

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Amnesty International

Human Rights Violations in North-East Sri Lanka

1 INTRODUCTION

An Amnesty International delegation visited Sri Lanka in June 1991 to assess the human rights situation in the country. This document provides details of substantial evidence it found of large scale extrajudicial executions and 'disappearances' occurring in the north-east since June 1990.[1] The organization also investigated reports of human rights violations by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the main Tamil armed opposition group which effectively controls parts of the northeast of Sri Lanka. These human rights violations have taken place in a context of armed conflict between government security forces and the LTTE. Amnesty International appreciates the particularly difficult law and order situation this has created. Nevertheless, it is calling upon the Sri Lankan government to uphold its obligations to promote and protect fundamental human rights at all times.

This was the first time since 1982 that the organization had been permitted to visit the country for research purposes. Earlier in the year, two delegates from Amnesty International had attended a conference on trade unions and human rights in South Asia as guest speakers. While there, they met government officials and discussed possibilities for future access by Amnesty International to Sri Lanka. Shortly after this visit, the government announced that it would 'favourably consider a formal request for a research visit if it were made'. Such a request was made on 26 April 1991 and a positive reply was received on 16 May 1991.

The delegation arrived on 1 June 1991 and stayed in the country for two weeks. During their stay, they had detailed discussions with government officials, political leaders and with individuals active in the field of human rights. They interviewed dozens of victims and relatives of victims of human rights violations allegedly committed by the Sri Lanka security forces and paramilitary groups associated with them, and by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Among the government officials met were the Presidential Adviser on International Affairs, the Minister of Industries, Science and Technology and Leader of the House of Parliament, the Secretary of the Ministry of Defence, the Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Head of the Human Rights Division in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Inspector General of Police, the Commander of the Army and the Solicitor General. The delegation also met with the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament as well as individual members of parliament and local government officials representing various regions and parties.

Amnesty International also held discussions with all members of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Involuntary Removal of Persons, which is mandated for one year to investigate cases of 'disappearances' occurring after 11 January 1991, and with the chairperson of the Human Rights Task Force, responsible for registering and reviewing the well-being of all detainees held under the Emergency Regulations and Prevention of Terrorism Act. The creation of the Human Rights Task Force was announced during Amnesty International's stay in the country.

Amnesty International wishes to stress how much it has valued having been able to visit Sri Lanka for research purposes and gather information about human rights violations committed by both sides to the conflict in the northeast, as reflected in this document. Amnesty International would like to express its thanks for the time and attention given to its delegates by members of the government and others, and for the spirit of cooperation in which they were received. It would also like to thank members of local organizations and individuals concerned with human rights protection for their help and cooperation and to express its respect and appreciation for their commitment, often carried out at considerable personal risk.

A draft of the first six chapters of this document was submitted to the government prior to the visit. Several officials provided Amnesty International with comments, which have been incorporated as appropriate. Chapter 7 of this document, describing abuses committed by the LTTE, and Chapter 9, outlining Amnesty International's recommendations to the Sri Lanka Government were not submitted to the government prior to the visit. Previously, Amnesty International had raised some of the concerns referred to in Chapter 7 directly with the LTTE through correspondence with its leadership and meeting with its international representatives. To date, Amnesty International has received no reply to the specific allegations. The recommendations in Chapter 9 have been made taking into account information provided by the government with regard to certain steps it has taken for the prevention and investigation of human rights violations, as described in Chapter 8.

Amnesty International interviewed at length victims of human rights violations and their relatives from the northeast residing in other parts of the country. It also met with several human rights activisits from the northeast. It decided to cancel initial plans to travel to Batticaloa in the east, for which it required military clearance, for security reasons. Several factors contributed to the decision to cancel this part of the program, including a threat received on 4 June 1991 from somebody claiming to be acting on behalf of the People's Revolutionary Red Army (PRRA), one of the 'death squads' operating in Sri Lanka in recent years. In addition, Amnesty International feared that coverage given during the national television news of 6 June about the delegation's specific plans to visit Batticaloa had undermined its ability to undertake its research program effectively and securely, particularly from the point of view of the prospective interviewees. Thirdly, information was conveyed to the delegation that the LTTE intended to intervene in the course of the proposed Amnesty International visit to the Batticaloa area. Amnesty International considered that these factors would have undermined its ability to gather information from a wide range of sources necessary for the conduct of impartial research and, more importantly, could have put at risk the persons seeking to give testimony.

Amnesty International regrets it was not able to travel to Batticaloa. Nevertheless, the organization made alternate arrangements for gathering information from victims and their representatives, and it found substantial evidence of a high level of gross human rights violations in that area, particularly in the period June 1990 – December 1990. Estimates of the numbers who have been extrajudicially executed or who have 'disappeared' in detention run to thousands.

The evidence Amnesty International has gathered clearly indicates that government forces, apparently acting with an almost total sense of impunity, have arbitrarily detained and deliberately killed thousands of defenceless people since the war resumed. Killings in the east have also been attributed to paramilitary or vigilante groups which, following the pattern established in recent years in the south, operate in plain clothes and use unmarked vehicles to reduce the risks of identification. Such groups are often believed to consist of members of the security forces. Almost all the victims of violations committed by government security forces and allied groups are members of the Tamil minority in whose name the LTTE claim to be fighting for a separate Tamil state – 'Tamil Eelam' – in the northeast of the island.

Amnesty International has also collected reports of extrajudicial executions of civilians by the LTTE, which controls substantial areas of the north. Victims include large numbers of Sinhalese and Muslim civilians as well as Tamil people considered 'traitors'. The LTTE has also been responsible for the 'disappearance' of prisoners it has taken, including policemen and others in government service as well as those it considers 'dissident' Tamils, and is reported to have tortured prisoners.

Resort by government security forces to widespread extrajudicial executions and 'disappearances' in contexts of armed opposition is not new in Sri Lanka. In recent years, the incidence of these gross human rights violations has soared. Between 1987 and 1990, while the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) was present in the northeast, Sri Lankan government forces operating in the south[2] are estimated to have committed tens of thousands of extrajudicial executions and 'disappearances' in an unprecedented campaign of counter-terror intended to eradicate a Sinhalese armed opposition group, the *Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna* (JVP, People's Liberation Front). These violations of the most basic principles of international human rights and humanitarian law had previously been committed in smaller numbers by government forces in the northeast: between 1984 and mid-1987, for example, Amnesty International recorded over 680 'disappearances' in the northeast. Between 1987 and 1990, Amnesty International received reports of 43 'disappearances' from the northeast, for which the IPKF are believed responsible. The rate of gross human rights violations escalated in the area after June 1990, when direct conflict resumed between the LTTE and government forces: figures compiled by local human rights organizations suggest that the total number of 'disappearances' committed by government forces and paramilitary groups associated with them in the northeast since June 1990 is over 3,000. The victims have mainly been young men, but in some cases women and children of all ages, including babies, have 'disappeared' or have suffered extrajudicial execution.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Conflict in the Northeast

The resumption of hostilities in June 1990 marked a new, more intense, phase in more than a decade of growing conflict in northeastern Sri Lanka between armed, secessionist Tamil militants and the Sri Lankan state.

When Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) gained independence from Great Britain in 1948 it inherited a democratic political system functioning within a unitary state framework. After independence, demands by Tamil politicians for a system of government which would grant greater autonomy to minority areas were repeatedly rejected and have remained a source of political tension in Sri Lanka. The unitary state was retained in the Republican Constitution of 1972 and in the most recent Constitution of 1978, which introduced an executive presidency for the first time.

The population of Sri Lanka is about 16.5 million people. Of these, some 74 per cent are officially classified in ethnic terms as Sinhalese, 18 per cent as Tamil and seven per cent as Moor. The Tamil population is divided between Sri Lanka Tamils (12.5 per cent), whose descendants are recognized as having a long history in the island, and the Plantation Tamils (5.5 per cent), who are descendants of labourers brought from southern India to Sri Lanka to work on tea estates during the British colonial period. In terms of religious affiliation, approximately 70 per cent of the population are Buddhist, 15 per cent Hindu, eight per cent Muslim and seven per cent Christian (mostly Roman Catholic). Most Sinhalese are Buddhist; most Tamils are Hindu; some Sinhalese and Tamils are Christian; and Moors are Muslim.

The Sinhalese population forms the majority in all but the Northeastern Province, and is most heavily concentrated in the southwestern quarter of the island. The former Northern Province (which was temporarily merged with Eastern Province in September 1988) is primarily inhabited by Sri Lankan Tamils, while the former Eastern Province has almost equal numbers of Tamils, Sinhalese and Muslims. The Muslim population speaks Tamil as its first language, while Tamils and Sinhalese speak Tamil and Sinhala respectively.

A resolution calling for a separate Tamil state of Eelam was passed in 1976 at the first national conference of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF). The TULF hoped to achieve its objective by working within the established democratic framework. By 1978, however, several violent attacks against the police force in Jaffna had occurred which were attributed to the recently formed Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). In the following years, other Tamil separatist groups were formed in northern Sri Lanka to engage in armed opposition to the government. The scale of such opposition mounted despite government attempts to suppress the armed separatist movement by force.

In their call for 'Tamil Eelam', Tamil separatists claim both the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka, which in September 1988 were temporarily merged into a single Northeastern Province. The Tamil separatist demand has in part been fuelled by disputes over the allocation of resources within the state, as well as access for Tamils to education and jobs in the state sector. Although the rights of minorities have been protected under the successive constitutions of Sri Lanka, the state has increasingly been perceived by members of the Tamil minority as identified with majority Sinhalese interests and with Buddhism, the main religion of the Sinhalese majority. On the other side, however, many Sinhalese perceive themselves as a vulnerable minority within the wider regional context, especially in relation to the 50 million Tamil speakers in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

In July 1987 the governments of Sri Lanka and India, then headed respectively by President Junius Richard Jayewardene and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, signed an accord. None of the Tamil militant groups which had been fighting the government were signatories to the accord, although they had been involved in the negotiations. Among other provisions, the accord brought Indian troops to the northeast to take charge of its security. It was intended that the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) would disarm the various Tamil militant groups, including the LTTE, in preparation for elections to a provincial council for the newly-united Northeastern Province. The new, island-wide system of provincial councils envisaged in the accord was to provide greater regional devolution of powers and was incorporated into the Constitution under the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution. The permanent character of the establishment of the Northeastern Province was, under the terms of the accord, subject to a referendum to be held in all areas of the pre-September 1988 Eastern Province. This referendum was due to take place before the end of 1988 but has been repeatedly postponed since.

Elections to provincial councils in each of Sri Lanka's eight provinces were held at various times during 1988. The northeastern provincial council election took place in December 1988. The Indian troops had been unable to disarm the LTTE, which by then had withdrawn its tentative support for the Indo-Sri Lanka accord, boycotted the elections and continued a strategy of armed opposition in pursuit of a separate state – but now against the Indian forces and their allies rather than directly against the Government of Sri Lanka. Several Tamil militant groups had allied with the Indian forces and contested the elections. These included the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), which secured control of the provincial council.

In April 1989 the LTTE, which was fighting the IPKF, entered into negotiations with the Sri Lankan Government and two months later announced a cessation of hostilities with the government, although not with the Indian forces. President Ranasinghe Premadasa, the former Prime Minister, who was elected President of Sri Lanka in December 1988, had opposed the Indo-Sri Lanka accord and pledged in his election campaign that he would ensure withdrawal of the Indian forces. Agreement on the date of withdrawal was finally reached with the new Indian Government of Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh in late 1989, and all Indian troops had left Sri Lanka by the end of March 1990.

As the Indian troops withdrew, heavy fighting was reported between the LTTE and a newly formed force, the Tamil National Army (TNA), which had been established using forced conscription by the EPRLF, aided by the Indian forces. There was also fighting between the LTTE and the armed cadres of Tamil groups which had allied with the Indian forces. Hundreds of lives were lost, thousands of members and supporters of the EPRLF and its allies fled to India, and the LTTE took effective control of the northeast. Negotiations continued between the government and the LTTE on the future administration of the area. Government administrative officers remained in place in the northeast, as did government police officers, but in practice most of their activities were subject to control by the LTTE.

The situation changed on 10 June 1990 when the LTTE suddenly surrounded and occupied Batticaloa police station, ostensibly because of a quarrel about police having assaulted a civilian. The next day, the LTTE ordered police officers in the east to vacate all police stations. That day, the LTTE also attacked an army convoy at Kalmunai, killing ten soldiers. Reports indicate that most police officers surrendered their police stations without a fight. At Kalmunai and Kaluwanchikudi, however, police and LTTE fought before police surrendered. The LTTE took captive hundreds of police officers. It appears that most Tamil police officers, as well as some Sinhalese and Muslim officers held prisoner were summarily executed. The bodies of some of those killed have been found. For example, a police officer from Kalmunai who escaped with injuries was reported in the press as saying that he and 113 of his colleagues had been taken off by the LTTE, lined up and shot. Amnesty International has collected information about 91 police officers

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considered 'disappeared' since June 1990. Some of these officers may be still alive in LTTE custody, others may have been killed.

These attacks by the LTTE marked the renewal of armed conflict in the northeast. Several last minute attempts at talks in Jaffna between the main government negotiator, Minister of Justice A.C.S. Hameed, and several LTTE leaders initially resulted in an agreement on a ceasefire but it never materialized. The LTTE continued to attack police stations and army camps. The government moved military reinforcements into the area, and as hostilities escalated the late Minister of State for Defence, Ranjan Wijeratne, announced to parliament on 18 June 1990 that 'from now on it is all-out war'.

Although the government repeatedly stated that security forces action was intended to destroy the LTTE alone, and was not an assault against the Tamil population of the northeast as a whole, it also said it would deal with the LTTE in the same manner as it had recently dealt with the JVP in the south. Indeed, the broad powers granted to the security forces under the Emergency Regulations, which included the power to dispose of bodies without post-mortem or inquest, facilitated extrajudicial executions and 'disappearances', and also appeared to contribute to a sense of impunity within the security forces.

Similarly, after the war resumed in the northeast, the government appeared to condone the summary execution of suspected members of the LTTE instead of insisting on their lawful arrest where possible, and on their trial and punishment according to law. Thus the former Minister of State for Defence, Ranjan Wijeratne, told parliament on 7 August 1990 that 'the government will show no mercy to these Tamil terrorists, criminals who do not deserve to live' (as quoted by *Associated Press*, 7 August 1990). Amnesty International fears that such public statements made by senior members of the government, together with lack of action by the government to halt serious abuses over the years, have encouraged the security forces to commit extrajudicial executions and 'disappear' prisoners with a sense of impunity. This fear is reinforced by reports that military officers in the northeast have intimidated Tamil civilians in refugee camps with stories of how they finished off the JVP in the south, and would repeat this performance in the northeast against the LTTE.

2.2 Control of the Northeast

After the outbreak of the fighting in June 1990, government forces quickly took control of Vavuniya and the main towns in the east, which the LTTE vacated as government forces advanced. They also took control of the eastern coastal road linking the towns. In August, government forces took control of Kayts and Mandaitivu islands off Jaffna, and in November they took control of Mannar island.

By May 1991 the LTTE remained in firm control of almost all of the Jaffna peninsula. Over 200 members of the Sri Lanka Army and police force remained besieged in the Jaffna fort until mid-September 1990, when they were rescued and the fort was abandoned. The LTTE also remained in control of the area north of Vavuniya, despite the presence of army camps in several locations in the area, and was also active in other areas of the northeast.

The conflict has taken a different form in different parts of the northeast. Government forces have waged a bombing campaign from the air on those areas of the north controlled by the LTTE. Damage to property through bombing has been extensive; thousands of civilians have been displaced; many others have been injured or killed. The government has repeatedly announced that its forces drop leaflets from the air to warn civilians in advance of air-raids, so that they can vacate the area for places of safety. In some reported instances, however, leaflets were not dropped at all; in others, the bombing started very much sooner than the deadline indicated in the leaflets. For example, on 20 January 1991 leaflets were dropped from helicopters onto Valvettiturai, Jaffna District, warning the residents to leave within 48 hours. The bombing of Valvettiturai began only three hours later. People were reported to have been killed in the bombing, but details of the casualties are not known.

Residents of the Jaffna peninsula have also complained that civilians have been chased by military helicopters, fired at and sometimes killed. Markets, where civilians gather to buy supplies, are also reported to have come under attack from the air. For example about 12 people were reportedly killed at Chavakachcheri market, Jaffna, when it came under helicopter fire on 9 October 1990. Further credibility was given to the repeated allegation that civilians were being targeted from the air when on 3 May 1991 a clearly marked vehicle carrying medical staff from the French non-governmental organization *Médécins sans Frontières* was attacked from the air by a helicopter between Madhu and Vavuniya. Four members of the medical team were injured. *Médécins sans Frontières* said that they had received permission from the Ministry of Defence to travel in the area that day. The defence ministry first claimed that shots had been fired from a vehicle travelling behind the *Médécins sans Frontières* team, and that this vehicle, not the *Médécins sans Frontières'* vehicle, was the target. It then said that the team was travelling on a prohibited road during a curfew. The *Médécins sans Frontières team, however, have said that no other vehicle was in the area when they were attacked, that no shots had been fired from the ground, and that they were not in the wrong area. The government appointed a one-man commission of inquiry into the incident. The report of this commission concluded that 'no person or persons in the services of the Sri Lanka Government was responsible for any wrongful act of omission or commission' but suggested a number of steps to be taken to prevent the recurrence of such incidents.*

In the east, little fighting was reported when government forces moved into the main towns, as the LTTE had already evacuated the towns and moved into the jungle areas. Nevertheless, government forces embarked in large-scale round-ups of civilians, many of whom were subsequently killed or 'disappeared'. The LTTE has remained active in the east since June 1990, and has attacked both military and civilian targets.

The particular human rights concern which Amnesty International is highlighting in this report – extrajudicial executions and 'disappearances' – have mostly been committed by government forces in the east, and in other areas which they control on the ground. 'Disappearances' and killings of prisoners by the LTTE have mostly been reported from the north, where they execute effective control, as well as from other areas. The LTTE have also committed many extrajudicial executions of Sinhalese and Muslim civilians in the east.

Since the outbreak of war in June 1990 the Muslim community has increasingly been drawn into the conflict in the east. The LTTE have attacked Muslim villages, as well as Sinhalese, killing civilians, including women and children. Armed Muslim groups have retaliated, killing Tamil villagers in revenge. Muslim villagers have been provided with arms by the government as home guards, and armed Muslims have regularly been reported to be working alongside the army in the east. In October, the LTTE issued an ultimatum to Muslims living in Mannar, Mullaitivu, Kilinochchi and Jaffna districts to leave the area or be killed: tens of thousands subsequently fled. Similar threats have been reported in late July 1991 in some villages in the east.

Since June 1990, there has been a massive displacement of people in the north and east. Independent estimates put the number of people displaced at over a million people. The government figures make the distinction between people in refugee camps and people who have lost their normal source of livelihood because of the conflict. An estimated 40,000 Muslims who had to flee the north following threats by the LTTE to leave the area or be killed are presently residing in Puttalam area in refugee camps or with relatives. It is also estimated that around 100,000 Tamils have taken refugee in Colombo, either in refugee camps or with relatives.

3 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Over the years, Amnesty International has built up a wide and varied network of contacts in all areas of Sri Lanka, despite not having been able to visit the country since 1982. It has relied on monitoring the national and international press, correspondence with local human rights activists such as lawyers, doctors, members of parliament and other concerned individuals including victims of human rights violations and their relatives. Amnesty International has also interviewed refugees and other people living abroad who have information on Sri Lanka.

For obvious reasons Amnesty International does not make public the names of contacts or other people met during its visit. As a matter of fact, several of the people met by the delegation explicitly requested to speak under conditions of total confidentiality and expressed fear of reprisals from either security forces or LTTE, if Amnesty International were to publish their case.

Most of the local organizations which have gathered first-hand documentation on human rights violations in the northeast in the past have ceased to exist. Those local organizations which continue to make representations to the military authorities in the east on behalf of relatives of 'disappeared' prisoners or victims of extrajudicial executions prepare lists of reported victims, but are often unable to follow up on individual cases. It can thus be difficult to know much about the specific circumstances in which reported round-ups of prisoners who then 'disappeared' were made, or details of the

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remedial action which was attempted on their behalf. However, one small human rights organization has continued to publish reports on the situation in the northeast which contain accounts of violations committed by both government forces and the LTTE based on information collected first-hand.

Members of parliament representing affected constituencies have raised questions in parliament about the fate of many people who have 'disappeared' while in the custody of government forces. Their questions are not often reported in the English-language or Sinhala-language press in Sri Lanka, however, and so the information they contain is inaccessible to most people living in the south.

Reports in the Colombo press of incidents in the northeast are predominantly derived from statements issued by the government or the military. They refer to the deaths in combat of 'terrorists' and of soldiers, but not to the deaths of civilians, whether in crossfire, shelling or as a result of the deliberate and illegal actions of the security forces. The Colombo press also publishes extensive reports of atrocities against civilians in the east committed by the LTTE, again often quoting government sources. Some Colombo newspaper editors have told Amnesty International they felt pressured not to report fully on human rights issues after receiving anonymous threats. A Tamil-language newspaper published in Colombo occasionally publishes reports indicating that extrajudicial executions have been committed by government forces.

Newspapers published in Jaffna are closely controlled by the LTTE. The LTTE have silenced dissent within the areas they control by killing, threatening or driving out those who have spoken or written against them.

Journalists from the international press, including television crews, who visited the north and east have reported on human rights violations committed in the area, but their visits have only been sporadic.

Fear also prevents people from reporting violations committed by the Sri Lanka security forces. Members of citizens' committees in the east, who made representations to the security forces on behalf of prisoners in their custody, have been killed or have 'disappeared'. Among them are Mr. Pandiyuram, alias Kanapathipillai, chairperson of the Kalmunai Citizens' Committee who 'disappeared' together with one of his sons at the end of June 1990 and Mr. Jegarajasingham, member of the Valaichchenai Citizens' Committee, who 'disappeared' in June 1990, while making a representation at the local army camp. Amnesty International has also learned of prisoners released from military custody in the east who, despite suffering from injuries sustained through torture, were warned by the military not to attend a hospital for treatment. Nevertheless, individuals who have visited the northeast have provided first-hand information to Amnesty International, and the relatives of some victims of human rights violations in the northeast have also contacted Amnesty International themselves.

Amnesty International has collected the names of thousands of people who have reportedly been extrajudicially executed or 'disappeared' in the northeast, but has full documentation on relatively few cases. The individual cases included in this report are those on which most information is available. The case material presented here is only illustrative, and does not reflect the full extent of the problem.

(To be continued).

[1] The term 'the northeast' refers to what is presently the Northeastern Province, which includes the districts of Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaittivu, Vavuniya, Mannar, Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Amparai.

[2] 'The south' refers to all areas of Sri Lanka outside the Northeastern Province. Gross and widespread human rights violations reached critical levels in 1988 and 1989 in this area. This was described in the Amnesty International report *Sri Lanka: Extrajudicial Executions. 'Disappearances' and Torture, 1987 – 1990,* (AI Index: ASA 37/21/90) and *Sri Lanka: An Update on Human Rights Concerns,* (AI Index: ASA 37/32/90) of September 1990.

Tamil Nadu Invokes Anti-Sedition Laws

The Tamil Nadu government has invoked the Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act of 1911, to ban meetings called by anti-Indian and pro-LTTE groups in the state.

The measure became necessary in the context of a rash of conferences and meetings organised by revolutionary groups seeking 'self-determination' for the Tamils of Tamil Nadu, calling for support for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), now waging an armed struggle for an independent Tamil Eelam in Sri Lanka.

The police had banned such meetings in Vellore, Ambattur, Panrutti, Tiruchi, Harur and Tirunelveli, under various laws including one which prohibits creating enmity between India and a 'friendly Asiatic power' (Sri Lanka). Over 500 persons had been taken into custody, many of them under the National Security Act (NSA).

The use of the anti-sedition law would help curb the tendency of the supporters of the Sri Lankan Tamil cause to air their 'anti-Indian' and 'seditious' views in the conferences, police said.

'For this purpose the whole of Tamil Nadu has been designated as a proclaimed area,' said Mr. J. Ramakrishnan, superintendent of the special branch of Tamil Nadu Police.

'The law is valid for six months and persons convicted under the act could serve six months' imprisonment', Mr. Ramakrishnan said.

Nobody has been arrested under this act so far, he said.

Mr. Ramakrishan said those organising these conferences were basically 'Naxalite' Marxist-Leninist groups like the Indian People's Front, the Peoples War Groups (Kodandaraman Group) the People's Art and Literary Association, the Tamil Nadu Organising Committee faction of the CPI (ML), the Tamil Nadu Communist Party (ML), the Tamil Nadu Liberation Army, the Organisation for Civil and Democratic Rights and the Radical Youth Front.

'These groups which as Marxist-Leninist groups organising peasants to kill their class enemies had failed to get public support, have now resorted to upholding Tamil nationalism as a way of getting public support', Mr. Ramakrishnan said.

'They combine the demand for a separate Tamil Eelam with self-determination for the Tamils of India', he added.

The assassinated former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi is branded a fascist and a killer of thousands of Tamils and Sikhs. Any attempt to glorify Rajiv Gandhi and denigrate the LTTE is condemned. The main line political parties like the Congress, the AIADMK, DMK and the Communists are dubbed as being insincere cheaters of the Tamils. The non-LTTE Tamil militant groups are dubbed traitors to the Eelam Tamil cause. India is described as an expansionist and fascist state. The immediate demand of these groups is the giving up of the proposal to repatriate the Sri Lankan Tamil refugees, a stop to the anti-LTTE propaganda and an end to the harassment and arrest of pro-LTTE groups.

'The LTTE cult is unlikely to strike roots here', he asserted. Asked if the LTTE leadership in Jaffna or some political parties in Tamil Nadu could be behind the recent resurgence of anti-national forces, Mr. Ramakrishnan said that he had no concrete evidence to suggest instigation by any of the mainline political parties.

'But there is a strong suspicion in the government that certain pro-LTTE sections in the DMK could be instigating these groups. The mainline policy would be dangerous for their political survival. But they could always foment trouble through proxies', Mr. Ramakrishnan said.

On LTTE activities in Tamil Nadu, Mr. Ramakrishnan said that there has been a containment.

Jayalalitha Wearing a Crown of Thorns

by Sujin Segar

In the words of the AIDMK supremo, Ms. Jayalalitha, as chief minister of India's southern state of Tamilnadu, she finds herself wearing a crown of thorns and all that she has is a chair of nails. She blames the government of her predecessor, Kalaignar Karunanidhi, for her current predicament but claims that the very fact that her administration has tackled many serious problems it inherited, with a head-on determination, has made her task quite challenging and doubly significant.

THE TIGER MENACE

Law and order situation in Tamilnadu was such that when she took office, for her personal protection alone, she had to set up an elaborate round the clock security service. She emphasised in a recent interview, marking nearly a hundred days in office, that the extent of the activities of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and their impact on the state and the neighbouring ones had reached alarming proportions.

In a report that appeared in the Hindu, she said when she assumed office she was shocked to discover the extent to which they had penetrated into the state and the sinister portents of their activities had even spread to Karnataka and Kerala as well. The State Government, she assured, was trying its best to contain this menace.

She was, however, angered by the reaction of the Union Home Minister, Shanker Rao Chavan to her government's proposal to the Central Government to allocate Rs.800 million for a state police modernisation scheme to fight the 'Tiger Menace'. She was also annoyed that Mr. Chavan, during his visit to Tamilnadu to survey the coastal areas under Tiger impact, failed to extend her the courtesy of a visit.

Commenting further on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the Chief Minister expressed the view that it was the effective action taken by the state police that has caused the cadre of this Sri Lankan militant organisation to flee to the neighbouring states. She also said that there were indications that the LTTE leader has asked his followers to return to Sri Lanka since Tamilnadu was getting too hot for them.

THE CAUVERY DISPUTE

The Cauvery issue is a major bone of contention between Madras and Karnataka. There is considerable justification for the anger and disappointment of the Tamilnadu Government on this issue and how Delhi has reacted to it. The battle over the use of the waters of Cauvery for agriculture was a long drawn out one and finally Tamilnadu got an interim award. Even though it fell far short of its expectations, Chief Minister Jayalalitha claimed that they accepted the decision with grace.

Criticising Karnataka Government's irresponsible decision to refuse

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Jayalalitha

to accept the Cauvery Waters Tribunal's interim order, Ms. Jayalalitha said that Tamilnadu is virtually dependant on the Cauvery while Karnataka has other rivers such as the Krishna and Tungabhadra to nourish its lands.

Delhi's decision to refer this issue to the Supreme Court instead of making Karnataka to obey the decision of a Tribunal appointed under its own Act of 1956 has been seen as a callous action by the Narasimha Rao Government. Reacting to this, Ms. Jayalalitha observed: 'If the award of the Tribunal is not honoured, there will be no place at all for any tribunal in future in the Indian scheme of things'. She added: 'I am only fighting for the legitimate rights of Tamilnadu because it is a question of life and death'.

THE KACHCHATIVU THREAT

Recently, the Tamilnadu chief minister demanded from the Central Government that the tiny isle of Kachchativu be retrieved from Sri Lanka. This has created some furore in Delhi. In an agreement signed between India and Sri Lanka in 1974 known as the Indo-Sri Lanka Boundary Agreement, it was stated, subject to sovereign control of the waters, 'Indian fishermen and pilgrims will enjoy access to visit Kachchativu as hitherto and will not be required by Sri Lanka to obtain travel documents or visas for these purposes.'

While Delhi is wondering as to why she is making so much out of such an insignificant issue and in some quarters she is even being accused as pandering to Tamil chauvinism, in Tamilnadu there is hardly any doubt about the problems that this isle is causing to the local fishermen.

The 1974 agreement also provides for full fishing rights in the vicinity of this isle as well as for the fishermen to dry their nets on it. Furthermore, the waters around it are very rich in prawns and Tamil fishermen from the southernmost coastal areas have thrived on it for decades. But in recent times they have been harassed by the Sri Lankan Navy, threatened, tortured and at times shot at and have had their boats confiscated. A number of them have also been killed by naval fire. Ms. Jayalalitha has accused the Central Government as having failed not only to protect the poor Indian fishermen but also to protest strongly to the Government of Sri Lanka about the conduct of its Naval personnel.

TOUGH DECISION

Cheap illicit liquor has been the cause of major social problems in Tamilnadu for many years. During the recent election campaign, Ms. Jayalalitha gave a promise to the womenfolk that the abolition of this trade would be one of her first tasks if returned to power. True to her word, the very first order she signed as Chief Minister marked her government's determination to end this trade.

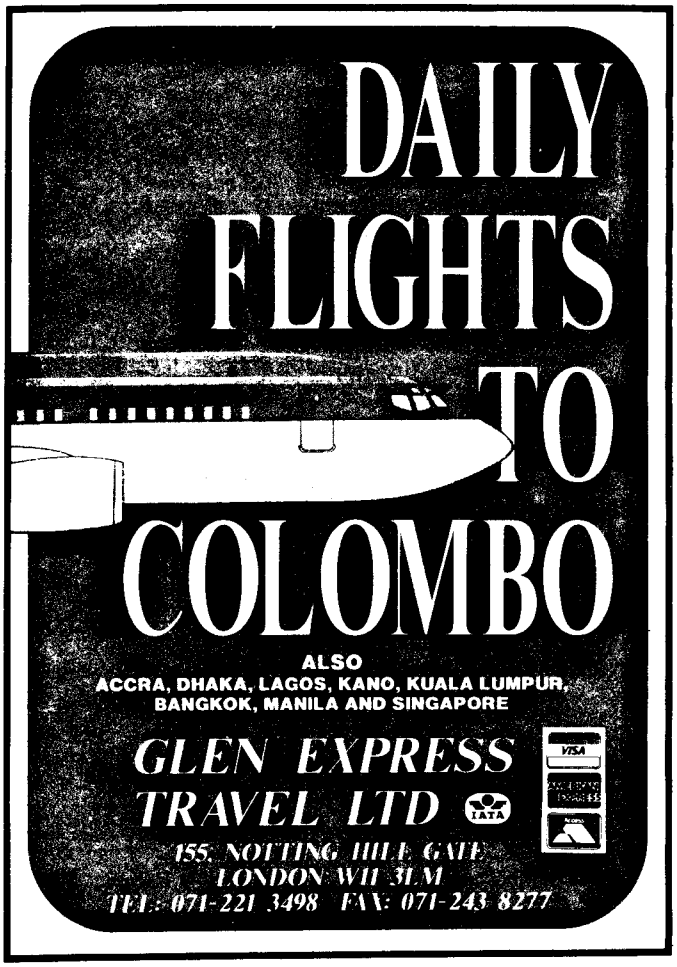
Although the state has lost an incredibly massive amount of Rs.3220 million as a result of banning the sale of this liquor, a tough and determined stand on this has been welcomed.

Continued from page 9

this to anyone would result in death for Mr. de Silva and his family, the message said.

Investigations revealed that Stanley de Silva obeying the instructions contained in the letter had handed over a bag containing two million rupees to a representative of the group at a place opposite Jatika Pola at Narahenpita, through one of his relatives.

Attorney Stanley Tilakeratne with Jayantha Weerasinghe, Anura Jayasundera, Codline Waidyaratne and Leslie Iddamalgoda appeared for the three suspects.



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NEWS ROUND-UP

● **FIVE OPPOSITION** parties have jointly appealed to all civil servants, heads and all ranks of the armed services, the Inspector General of Police and the police service to strictly adhere to the provisions of the Constitution and the law; ensure the maintenance of law and order, refuse to follow illegal orders from whomsoever they may emanate and not to harass law-abiding citizens in their democratic rights and freedoms. The joint appeal has been made by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, Lanka Sama Samaja Party, Mahajana Eksath Peramuna, Nava Sama Samaja Party and the EPRLF.

● **LEADERS** of the UNP rebel group have complained of harassment and intimidation by persons allegedly belonging to the security forces. Gamini Dissanayake told a news conference that his security officer's home had been visited by four men claiming to be from the security forces at midnight, questioned the officer's wife, pulled his child out of bed and questioned them on the whereabouts of the security officer who himself was from the police. Lalith Athulathmudali said that one of his woman supporters from Maligawatte had been assaulted with sticks and hospitalised with fractures. He also said that his security had been cut from six to two guards.

● **THE LEADER** of the group of LTTE gunmen who murdered Batticaloa Member of Parliament, Mr. Sam Thambimuttu and his wife in front of the Canadian Embassy in March last year was recently arrested by the army and is now in police custody. The gunman whose name has not been disclosed was identified when driving away in a vehicle which had towed a powerful car-bomb that exploded at Kattankuddy recently killing sixteen persons including an eight-year-old girl.

● **TWO MORE** State Ministers, Ravindra Samaraweera and Ariyaratne Jayatilleke have tendered their resignations from the government. In their letter addressed to the President they have stated that the main reason for their resignation was the allegation that the President provided arms, money and cement to the LTTE.

● **SIX SOLDIERS** were killed in an LTTE attack at Thandikulam north of Vavuniya on 9 September. This attack came less than 24 hours after the LTTE attacked the army's forward defence lines at Pemaduwa north of Anuradhapura killing a soldier.

● **TWO TAMILS SHOT DEAD** in Transkei, Janagan (25) and Kathirgamanathan (43), two Sri Lankan expatriate Tamils, who had worked in Butterworth, Transkei for more than an year, were shot dead on 8.9.91 by a policeman attached to the National Keypoint guard unit at Buttersworth bulk fuel depot. Janagan was a bachelor while Kathigamanathan's wife and five children are in Vallalai, Atchuvaley, Sri Lanka. Two weeks ago another Asian, Naidoo, who worked for a construction company had been bludgeoned to death.

● **A JOINT TEAM** of police-army personnel recovered the decomposed bodies of at least 35 police officers in unmarked graves at Passikudah in the eastern Batticaloa district on 9 September. The victims had their hands tied behind their backs and shot at point blank range, and the police have been able to identify some of the victims. Nearly a thousand policemen surrendered to the LTTE in June last year when they laid siege to all police stations in the northeast.

● **THE RULING** United National Party (UNP) in Sri Lanka has informed the Commissioner of Elections and the Secretary General of Parliament that it had expelled eight rebel MPs, including Lalith Athulathmudali and Gamini Dissanayake, from the party and that under the Constitution they were also unseated from Parliament. But the rebel MPs have filed petitions in the Supreme Court challenging the legality and validity of their expulsions from the UNP. Under the Constitution, the Court is expected to deliver their judgments within two months and until such time the dissidents will have the right to continue as MPs.

● **SECURITY FORCES** claimed on 11 September that Sri Lankan airforce planes bombed and destroyed a bakery run by the LTTE and a stock of over 1000 bags of flour in the jungles of Mullaitivu. It was also claimed that at least 25 LTTE cadres engaged in the making of bread and other items of food were also killed in the attack.

● **TAKING ADVANTAGE** of the present political crisis in the country, remnants of the JVP have once again commenced a poster campaign in south Sri Lanka. Several posters similar to those that appeared on city walls in the 1988-89 period have appeared in some areas. Police are reported to be going round tearing off the posters no sooner they appear.

● **TWO POLICEMEN** were killed and seventeen others injured when a big contingent of LTTE cadres attacked and smashed up a police station near Sithandy in eastern Batticaloa and got away with a large quantity of weapons.

● **THE LTTE** has introduced its own curriculum to the schools in Jaffna with a new text book containing material relating to the struggle for Eelam and the LTTE. The new text book titled 'The New History' has been introduced in addition to the text book for social studies. The ceremonial release of the book took place recently at a leading Girls School in Jaffna. The LTTE leaders Yogaratnam Yogi and G. Mahendrarajah (Mahathaya) addressed the students who attended the ceremony.

● **THE PRESIDENTIAL** Commission on Involuntary Removal of Persons is at present inquiring into a complaint by the mother of a suspected JVP leader in Trincomalee that an Inspector of Police had allegedly demanded on 5 March Rs.200,000 for her son's release from police custody. The complainant Mrs. Piyaseeli Samaraweera said her son Jagath Chandrasiri Hettiarachchi was found burnt to death on 21 March.

● **SRI LANKAN** High Commissioner for India, Mr. Neville Kanakaratne, addressing the Association of Diplomats on September 13 said that the LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran will be tried in accordance with the law of the land if the charge of murder was proved against him. Though his government did not consider the LTTE the sole representative of the Sri Lankan Tamils, it was ready to hold negotiations with it to end the ethnic conflict in the country. 'We are waiting for a proper and authoritative response from the LTTE leadership in this regard', he said. Elections in the northeast should be held as soon as possible and 'if the LTTE gets a majority, they can elect Prabhakaran as the Chief Minister'.

● **EIGHTEEN** persons, including seven airforce men were recently arrested by the police in connection with a series of robberies and rape alleged to have been committed during 1989 and 1990. About Rs.500,000 worth of jewellery and electrical goods out of about Rs.2 million worth of items robbed by the group were also recovered.

● **THE TAMIL NADU** government has decided to close down all the refugee camps for Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in the coastal areas in the State for security reasons. There are several camps in the coastal towns of Nagaptnam, Rameshwaram and in the Sithamparanar district, housing thousands of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees. The State government officials want to prevent these coastal refugee camps becoming safe transit points for LTTE men. The refugees in these camps will be transferred to inland areas.

● **ONE OFFICER (CAPTAIN),** nine noncommissioned officers and four more soldiers were killed in an LTTE attack on 20 September as the army personnel were proceeding to Wakaneri from Valaichenai in eastern Sri Lanka. The soldiers who were travelling in two vehicles were ambushed and attacked with machine guns and rocket propelled grenades.

READERS FORUM

DEMOCRACY A UTOPIAN DREAM

Your regular contributor S. Sivasegaram raised an important issue in his essay on the democracy and Tamil liberation (*TT*, Aug.91). After reading it, I am of the opinion that his utopian view of democracy does not exist anywhere in this globe now. He himself couldn't mention a single country in which his utopian style of democracy is practised. For pragmatic purposes, I will survey briefly, how people living in the different continents are currently managing their lives without true democracy.

According to the *World Almanac 1990*, the current population of the world is 5,320 million. Of this, 2,906 million is living in Asia. Let me annotate the countries with more than 100 million population.

China (1100 million); communist dictatorship.

India (845 million); '*durbar* democracy' adopted by Nehru clan.

Indonesia (184 million); military dictatorship.

Japan (123 million); *shogun*-style one party rule.

Bangladesh (110 million) and Pakistan (108 million); 'democracy' of military generals.

Not a single country in Asia can boast of practising democracy, as idealised by the proponents of democracy in the 18th century America. Jawaharlal Nehru did comment on the drawbacks of this version of democracy (propagated as the best model of democracy) and its underlying motto, All men are born equal. In his book, *Glimpses of World History*, Nehru wrote, 'The Declaration of Independence of 1776 stated that "All men are born equal". this is hardly a correct statement, if analysed, for some are weak and some are strong, some are more intelligent and capable than others. . . "All men are born equal" – and yet there was the poor Negro, a slave with few rights! What of him? How did he fit in with the Constitution? He did not fit in, and he has not yet fitted in'.

This was written by Nehru in 1932. Even almost 60 years later, it still remains true. The American model of democracy was born deformed. Its formulators were blind to the human rights of the slaves and women who were living with them. In fact, every leader of the American revolution owned slaves.

Is democracy alive in the Islamic world? 865 million live in Africa and Middle East and in this region too, democracy is hardly practised.

The ruling politicians of the two countries (South Africa and Israel), who on paper at least subscribe to the democratic ideals, practise a perverted version of democracy with regard to the human rights of ethnic groups they despise (Blacks in South Africa and Palestinians in Israel).

Latin America and Caribbean region is populated by 455 million. Even in this region, democratic ideals have not taken a firm root in majority of the countries. Only Costa Rica, which abolished its army following the brief civil war in 1948, has enjoyed a competitive multi-party electoral democracy since 1949.

Democracy is currently 'practised' only in the twelve NATO member countries (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom, USA and 'West' Germany), two neutral European countries (Sweden and Switzerland) and two Oceanian countries (Australia and New Zealand). Many of these countries do have a criminal record of imperialistic and colonialistic past.

Bertrand Russell, in his classic work *Power* (1938), illustrates the fallacy of democracy even in these countries. 'Even a completely democratic government – if such a thing were possible – involves a redistribution of power. If every man has an equal voice in joint decisions, and if there are (say) a million members, every man has a millionth part of the power over the whole million, instead of complete power over himself and none over others. . . The members of the government have more power than the others, even if they are democratically elected; and so do officials appointed by a democratically elected government. . .'

It is clearly visible that the concepts of democracy modelled by the American WASPS (White Anglo Saxon Protestants) has never been accepted by populations adhering to the three religious faiths; Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. This is clearly seen by the rejection of democracy in Asia, Africa and the Middle East where these three religious faiths are widely practised. I would suggest that those interested in the fallacy of democracy should read the works of Bernard Shaw, Bertrand Russell and Jawaharlal Nehru.

Sachi Sri Kantha

Osaka 565,
Japan.

CONSPIRACY AGAINST PRESIDENT

One of the reasons for the regular escalation and prolongation of the conflicts in North and South Sri Lanka has been the actions of local and foreign institutions who have been making handsome profits from the wars via arms sales and other military related procurements. Some political parties also have provided them fodder by pre-empting Government attempts to convene an all party conference on the issues.

Accordingly, the timing of the conspiracy against President Premadasa tends one to suspect that it may also be connected with the setting up of the select committee which could very well have created a framework for ending the costly military conflicts.

If however the select committee also identifies the problem as being one only in the North and that too of the privileged section of the Tamil community, then there can possibly be no long term solution to the actual problem. Such an approach will neither solve the problem nor prevent the wars in the North and the South. It would merely lead to an unwelcome return of the society to the pre 1956 situation.

In fact the main reason for the prolongation of the conflicts has been the failure to identify the similarity in character of the wars in the North and the South. Attempts to solve the problems have hitherto failed because they aimed to meet the needs primarily of the anglicized and other privileged sections of the two communities.

It is in fact this very approach that resulted in the Indian troops ending up in Sri Lanka. They were brought not to resolve the alleged ethnic conflicts but primarily to ensure the protection of the anglicized and other privileged sections of the two communities. It is acordingly not coincidental that the feudal, anglicized and other privileged sections of the two communities who in fact aided and abetted Indian and other foreign interference in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka are those who have been the prime movers and accomplices in the recent conspiracy.

The failure of the conspiracy would hopefully enable the problem to be viewed in the vernacular context and approached as one that has been existing both in the North and the South. Any negotiations carried out with only the aggrieved parties of the North, in the mistaken belief that the war in the South is over for good, would only lead to its accelerated resurgence.

Discussions would accordingly need to be carried out concurrently with the representatives of the vernacular Sinhalese and Tamil elements if a lasting solution is to be reached. Negotiating with the anglicized and feudal elements of the two communities would only ensure the prolongation of the conflicts as in the past.

Bernard Wijedoru

1410 Austin Tower,
Austin Avenue,
Hong Kong.

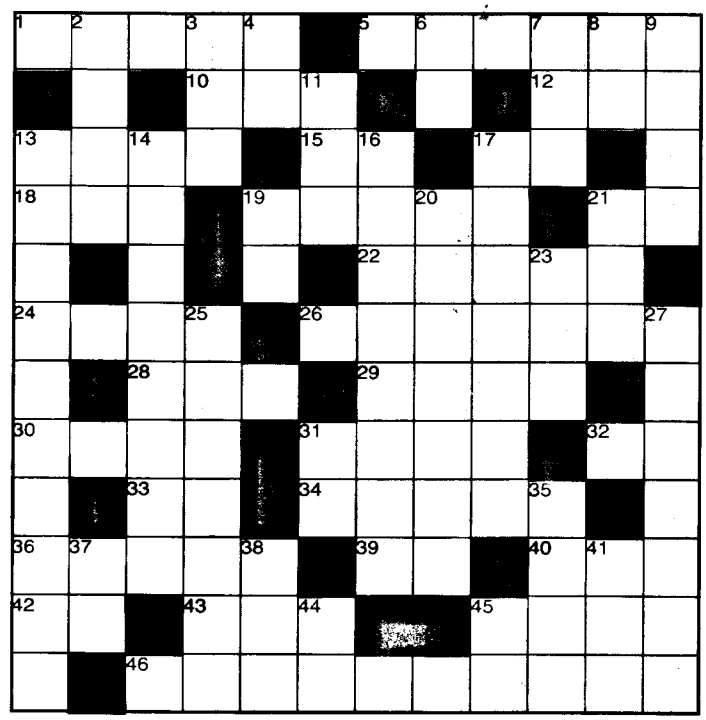
QUIZ CROSSWORDS – No. 9. Set by: Richards

Closing date for completed grid and coupon to be received is 30 November 1991.

Answers and the name of the winner – first all correct entry pulled out of a bag – will be announced in the December 1991 issue.

The winner will receive a prize of £20.00 sterling.

All entries should be sent to: Tamil Times, P.O. Box 121, Sutton, Surrey SM1 3TD, UK.



Across.

1. A small mission school in North Sri Lanka grew in stature and excelled in all aspects of education, sports and welfare under the principalship of the late I P Thurairatnam (5)
5. The first national principal and one of the finest educationalists of Sri Lanka, the late Ariam Paramasamy headed this Girls College during its most creative years (6)
10. A mighty memorial for a loving queen (3)
12. International Development Association (3)
13. Soft flat bread rolls (4)
15. It could be Her Majesty or even Air Seychelles (2)
17. In Tamilnadu, Ms. Jayalalitha may be addressed in this manner informally (2)
18. Expresses triumph or surprise (3)
19. Leafless stalk in certain plants (5)
21. Double-hard pencil (2)
22. There is one such college in Kokuvil, another in Karainagar, third in Chavakacheri, also in Colombo and other places, all of which have served our people well for decades with great commitment (5)
24. Smears with a substance used in roadworks (4)
26. In the field of sports and in the classrooms, this Vadamaradchy school is a class of its own (7)
28. Former President Eisenhower affectionately (30
29. Strike or smash (4)
30. Shrub from which cocaine is obtained (4)
31. Facts or information needed for inferences and decision making (4)
32. Briefly, a position of importance in institutions that need the trust of the community (2)
33. Small knight (2)
34. Anoint or give extreme unction (5)
36. Irritable and short-tempered (5)
39. Chemical symbol for arsenic (2)
40. A small child (3)
42. Pick that preposition from Togo and Tonga (3)
43. An inexpert performer or a smoked food item (3)
44. Prefixed to indicate as from a height from the Greek word akron (4)
46. An educational institution of great repute founded from a wellknown trust for girls with special emphasis on Tamil socio-cultural values and ethical principles (10)

Down:

2. The builder of the Great Ark (4)
3. Briefly, a worldwide communication agency in Sri Lanka (3)
4. Chemical symbol for sodium (2)
6. Perform or even an event (2)
7. Vigour (3)
8. Inherited psychological impulses unconsciously expressed (2)
9. A hundred thousand (4)
11. Briefly, a wellknown school on the outskirts of the City of Jaffna the development of which, and the rich influence it has on the Tamil community was greatly inspired by the educationalist Rajaratnam (3)
13. From the roots of this early educational effort, supported both by the Hindus and Christians, rose the citadel of missionary education in Jaffna (10)
14. As much as the Rev. John Bicknell was to Jaffna College, Father Long was to this great institution, the pride of the Catholic community (8)
16. Tellipallai's Hindu twin of Christian Union, founded by Thuraiappah and nurtured and built up as another great educational institution by his son, Jeyaratnam (8)
17. North Sri Lanka's Big Match rivals of St. John's College and the brother institution of Vembadi Girls College (7)
19. Station head of the Ceylon Government Railway, briefly (2)
20. During the 16th or 17th centuries these brand of seamen moved freely in the western Indian Ocean and even had staging posts in the Seychelles (7)
21. A loud outcry (3)
23. Australia's Democratic Liberal Party (3)
25. Ever-shining symbol of Principal Subramaniam's outstanding contribution to education in Jaffna and his commitment to the welfare of his fellow citizens (7)
27. One of the two big schools on the island of Karainagar (7)
31. Elected judicial officer in the United States, briefly (2)
35. Engrave on metal (4)
37. Ex-Officio (2)
38. The seasonal king variety is a delicacy in Jaffna (3)
41. Mouthlike parts or openings (3)
44. Further educational programme after BA (2)
45. Laotian monetary unit (2)

Quiz Crosswords – 7: Solutions.

Across: 1. Seychelles. 11. Dar. 12. Malacca. 14. Aimed. 16. Gateau. 17. LF. 18. Or. 19. Ens. 10. ER. 21. Billiard. 23. Asi. 24. EC. 25. Eel. 26. Arhat. 28. Rap. 30. SD. 31. Fa. 32. RI. 33. TTL. 34. Taffia. 37. Rial. 38. Bo. 39. NL. 40. Eon. 41. Aria. 43. In. 45. NNE. 46. Maldives. 49. Sap. 50. Poets.

Down: 1. Edification. 3. Yam. 4. Creole. 5. Em. 6. Lager. 7. Llandaff. 8. Eats. 9. SCE. 10. Mauritius. 13. Caesar. 14. Albert Rene. 15. Driest. 22. Aldabra. 23. Ah. 27. Rain. 29. Planes. 35. Foil. 36. Alive. 41. Amp 42. ADP. 44. Net. 47. Io. 48. SS.

Winner: Manomari Saravanamuttu, 33 Polwarth Drive, Brunton Park, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE 35 5NJ.

Continued from page 22

PRINCIPLED POSITION

The journal *Tamil Nation*, with Mr. S. Sivanayagam as editor, commenced publication with an article in its very first issue severely attacking the *Tamil Times* and its editor. Again a few issues later, there was another article in similar terms. I was surprised at these attacks particularly because the two articles were written by two members of the editorial board of the *Tamil Nation*, and Mr. S. Sivanayagam, who had been a regular and prolific contributor to the *Tamil Times*, had let this happen in a paper he was editing.

However, I was pleased to note (*Tamil Times*, August 1991) that your editor Mr. P. Rajanayagam had made representations to the Indian authorities making a persuasive case for the release of Mr. Sivanayagam who is in detention. This action confirms and enhances my esteem for the principled position the *Tamil Times* and its editor have adopted over the years.

K.K. Pillai

Colombo 3,
Sri Lanka.

Continued from page 13

the LTTE to offer their support to President Premadasa on the impeachment motion in return for acceding two demands – agree to an unconditional ceasefire by halting the ongoing military operations in the Mullaitivu district against LTTE bases and the release of some important LTTE men taken into custody following the bombing of the Joint Operations Headquarters in Colombo. LTTE's rival Tamil groups suggested that the crackdown against the LTTE in Tamil Nadu following Rajiv Gandhi's murder, the Elephant Pass military debacle in which over 700 LTTE cadres died and an equal number were seriously injured, and the sustained military operations in the Mullaitivu district have combined to compel the LTTE leadership to seek a period of respite, and it was for that purpose the LTTE had sent the three-man group to Colombo.

The three were expected to remain in Colombo at least until 8 October to take their oaths as MPs when parliament reconvened. But to everyone's surprise, apparently after their intended mission having failed, they abruptly left Colombo on 3 October having moved to four different hotels – Galadari Meridian, Hotel Renuka, Taj Samudra and Taprobane – during their one oneweek stay.

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Jaffna Hindu parents, *Australian citizens, seek professionally qualified or student, for pretty daughter, 23, Mars seventh house, Melbourne leading bank employee. Send horoscope, photograph, details. M 526 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Hindu *seeks partner for brother, 30, Canadian bank employee, permanent resident; sister, 24, pretty, attractive, 5'6", employed Colombo. Send horoscope, details. M 527 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Hindu Doctor *settled in U.K. seeks qualified partner with good family background for attractive, well accomplished graduate daughter, 25. M 528 c/o Tamil Times.*

Parents *seek qualified groom for well connected Jaffna Hindu, fully computer qualified daughter, 28, tall, slim, goodlooking. Send horoscope, details. M 529 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Hindu brother *seeks partners for sister, 32, professional working in Colombo and brother, 28, graduate doing MBA in USA. Intermarriage considered. M. 530 c/o Tamil Times.*

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OBITUARIES

Pandithar Sivalogam Sinnathurai, *Retired Head Teacher, Alaveddy, Sri Lanka; beloved husband of Thangaratnam; father of Dr. Balasanthiran (U.K.), Mrs. Balayogini Ratnam, Mrs. Balasunthari Vamadevan (both of Sri Lanka), Dr. Balachanthireswary Raveenthiran (New Zealand) and Mr. Balaindran (West Germany) passed away peacefully on 16.8.91 in Alaveddy. Special poojahs were held in Highgate Murugan Temple, London; in West Germany and in Brunei – 82 Boundary Road, London SW19 2AX. Tel: 081 543 1140.*

Mrs. Naguleswary Sinniah, *beloved wife of Mr. V. Sinniah (retired Assistant Commissioner, Cooperative Department, Sri Lanka), daughter of the late Mr. & Mrs. K. Paramanather (Kadduvan, Sri Lanka), mother of Sivakumar (Kansas City, USA), Indrakumar (Toronto, Canada), mother-in-law of Kalarani and Shanthi, sister of the late Dr. P. Nadarajah (Zambia), Mrs. B. Balasubramaniam & Mrs. M. Sivaloganathan (New Malden, UK) and Mrs. P. Santhirasekari (Toronto, Canada), niece of the late Mr. S. Sangarapillai (Kadduvan, Sri Lanka) & Mr. S. Kandavanam (Kokuvil, Sri Lanka), passed away on 28-9-91 in Toronto. Funeral took place in Toronto on 1-10-91 : Tel: Canada 416 724 5637.*

Mrs. Thangammah Sinniah (Packiam), *64, beloved wife of T. Sinniah, Retired Accountant, Railways, Sri Lanka; loving mother of Pakeerathan (Australia), Sritharan, Mrs. Sarathadevi Sri Shanmuganathan, and Prema (Bami) (all of U.K.); mother-in-law of Mrs. Vasuhi Pakeerathan and Sri Shanmuganathan; grand mother of Janakan and Sayanan; sister of Mrs. Rasammah Kumarasamy, Markandu (both of Sri Lanka) and the late Manickam; sister-in-law of Mrs. Nagammah Selvarajah and Mrs. Manickam Sivapiragasam (all of Sri Lanka) passed away on 3.10.91 and was cremated on 14th October. The members of her family sincerely thank all friends and relatives who condoled with them, sent messages of sympathy, attended the funeral and assisted in several ways. They regret their inability to thank them individually – 9 Owen Gardens, Woodford Bridge, Essex IG8 8DJ. Tel: 081 504 1363.*

Mrs. Kanmani Kanagaratnam *(80), dearly beloved wife of the late Dr. K. Kanagaratnam, formerly Medical Superintendant, Colombo Group of Hospitals, Sri Lanka; loving mother of Dr. Ganesan, Sriskandan, Arichandran, Meena, Sivan, Dr. Sivathondan and Mangay; mother-in-law of Rajeswary, Dorothy, Sushila, Dr. Selvarajah, G.M. Yoganandan, Dr. Yasothai and Dr. Williams expired on 26.9.91. Funeral took place in London on 1.10.91 – 13 Ruskin Way, London SW19 2UP.*

IN MEMORIAM

In loving memory of **Mr. Kanagasabapathy Nagarajah** *on the first anniversary of his passing away on 8.11.90.*

Times may change, but
Memories of you never fade
In our hearts you will always stay
Loved and remembered everyday.

Sadly missed and lovingly remembered by his loving wife Nagula, children Chandran, Kala and Ruby; son-in-law Nicholas; daughter-in-law Yesmin and grand children Selina, Trisha and Jeevan – 50 Sandy Lane South, Wallington, Surrey, U.K. Tel: 081 647 8384.

In loving memory of **Dr. T. Rasaratnam** *(Mani), Consultant Anaesthetist, Regional Hospitals, South Yorkshire, U.K. on the*

second anniversary of his passing away on 16.10.89. Sadly missed and lovingly remembered by his wife Renuka and children Madurika and Ramkumar – 9 Tithe Farm Close, South Harrow, Middx., HA2 9DP, U.K. Tel: 081 422 1053.

On the second anniversary of the passing away of our dear brother **Mr. Navaratnarajah Brodie** *on 14.10.89. We sadly miss him and long for all the love and affection he bestowed on us all, brothers, sisters, nephews and nieces, freely and joyously and to his wife Luxsumy, son Dinesh and his mother-in-law Mrs. Wijeyasekera. – 296 Alexandra Avenue, South Harrow, Middx., U.K.*

In loving memory of **Mrs. Dhanalakshmy Namasivayam,** *retired Head Teacher, Sandilipay Maha Vidyalayam, Sri Lanka, on the first anniversary of her passing away on 1.11.90.*

Sadly missed and fondly remembered by her children Rajakumaran, Rajani, Pathmini, Srikumar, Nalini, Anandakumar, Ramani and Sooriyakumar; grandchildren Sujanthan, Viroshini, Sujani, Jalantharai, Jalani, Kiruthika, Saranka, Piriyan and Durka; sons-in-law Wijayaratnam, Gunaseelan, Sivakumar, & Dr. Dhushiyanthakumar; and daughters-in-law Jegatheeswary, Aruleswary & Devaki – 4 Lorne Road, London E17 7PX, Tel: 081 509 1263 & 131 Byron Road, Manor Park, London E12, Tel: 081 470 2360.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

October 26 *6.45pm* **Mirudanga Arangetram** *of* **Jason & Jonathan Pararajasingham** *at the Commonwealth Institute, High Street Kensington, London W8.*

November 3 *1.00pm* **Deepavalli Lunch** *organised by* **SCOT,** *at Wandsworth Town Hall, Wandsworth High Street, London SW18 2PU. For tickets Tel: 081 870 9897.*

Nov. 3 *5.00 to 10.00pm* **Tamil Kalai Vizha** *presented by London School of Carnatic Music at 3rd Annual event at Riverdale Hall, Lewisham, London SE13. For details Tel: 081 690 7285 – V. Kanesamurty.*

Nov. 5 *Deepavali Festival.*

Nov. 6 *Ammavasai.*

Nov. 7 *Skanda Shasti Viratham – 1st day.*

Nov. 16 *6.30pm* **Performing Arts Society** *presents* **Bharatanatyam & Drama** *at Waltham Forest Theatre, Lloyds Park, Vinns Terrace, London E17. For details Tel: 081 459 4335/ 470 7883.*

Nov. 21 *Thirukkarthikai Dheepam.*

Nov. 23 *6.30pm* **SCOT** *presents* **Carnatic Vocal Recital** *by* **Smt Sivasakthy Sivanesan** *at Mountbatten Hall, Bharata Vidya Bhavan, 4A Castletown Road, London W14 9HQ. For tickets Tel: 081 870 9897/468 7181/653 7811.*

At the Bhavan Centre, 4A Castletown Road, London W14 9HQ. Tel: 071 381 3086/4068

Nov. 3 *7.30pm* **Kathak** *by* **Kumari Anjana Bhatt. For tickets Tel: 081 947 4709.**

Nov. 9 *5.30pm* **Lecture** *on* **Mahabharata** *by* **Mathoor Krishnamurthi.**

Nov. 9 *7.00pm* **'Temple Bells', Bharata Natyam** *by* **Prakash Yadagudde.**

Nov. 15 *7.00 to 7.30pm* **Talk** *by* **Swraj Paul** *on* **'The Responsible use of Wealth'.**

Nov. 17 *6.30pm* **Karnatic Vocal** *by* **Salem Jayalakshmi.**

Nov. 23 *5.30pm* **Lecture** *on* **Mahabharata** *by* **Mathoor Krishnamurthi.**

Nadhesa Samarpanam

Girija Varothayasingham *who is a remarkable performing artist and the conductor of the Nadana Bramam School of dancing in London and who had given performances in many parts of the world gave a solo performance at the Monash Secondary College Music Auditorium in Melbourne, Australia, on 11th August 1991. The programme was organised by the Tamils Rehabilitation Organisation and the proceeds were donated to the Tamil refugees in Sri Lanka.*

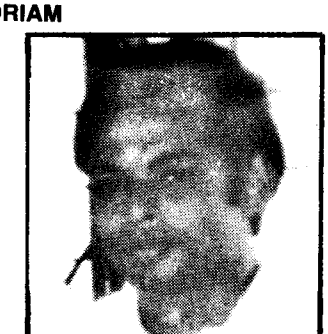
The musicians who accompanied and contributed towards this good cause were Vocal: Dr. Rama Rao and Dr. Jay Maheswaran, Mridangam: Mr. M. Ravichandra, Veena: Mr. S. Ramnath, Jaw Harp: Dr. S. Selvendra, Thalam: Mrs. N. Shivanath – all from Melbourne and Flute: Mr. Girither from Sydney.

Girija's performance in the pure Vazhuvoor style rarely seen in Melbourne was well appreciated by the audience. The Valzhuvoor tradition is being carefully maintained and developed by Girija at Nadana Bramam. She has presented four of her students' arangetrams of a very high standard.

– Art Lover from Melbourne.

IN MEMORIAM

Mrs. Florence Ariyamalar Rajasingham
Born 24.07.1922.



Rajasingham Manoharan
Born 30.07.1949

Killed 16.10.1987

We miss you both more than we could have ever thought
As each day dawns the despair and the anger grows
Until, the treacherous hand that killed you both
With his 'Peace Keeping Force', and
Left your bodies seven long days for dogs to feast,
Is unmasked to reveal his role in these murders most foul,
Our hearts will know no peace.
We pray that your souls have found the peace we so sadly lack.

Fondly remembered on their Fourth death anniversary by

C. Rajasingham, Vasuki Manoharan, Saratha and Priyan Manoharan, Dr. Narendran, Manohari Thevathasan, Selvi Rajendran, Neela Navaratnaraj, Jayadevan and Gowri Surendrakumar.

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Vocal Arangetram of Sai Swarupini

Memorable indeed was this, the first vocal Arangetram for Karnatic Music in Britain!

Sai Swarupini is the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Kathirgamathamby, and the student of Sm. Bushany Kalyanaraman. Happily, both Guru and Sri. Kalyanaraman himself were present on this joyous occasion on 8.9.91.

Sai Swarupini's accompanists were: Dr. Lakshmi Jayan, violin; Sri. M. Ravichandra, Sai's cousin from Melbourne, Mridangam; Sri Balasri Rasiah, Ghatum; Sri A. Srinivasan, Morsing; and Smt. Girija Varothayasingham, Sai's cousin, who is a qualified dance teacher, Tambura. It was verily a world wide assembly that evening in the Great Hall of the Civic Centre, Bromley, packed for the occasion.

Considering the challenge that an Arangetram is, Sai's approach to it was wonderfully contained and confident and she radiated an aura of sheer joy. Consequently, the mood of both accompanists and audience was speedily established for what was to be a long and arduous programme. Very wisely, Sai elected to sing in the traditional manner, i.e. without a break, and thus the momentum of the Kachcheri was not lost.

Traditional was her commencement with a Varnam in Khamas by Muttiah Bhagavathar, followed by invocation to Lord Ganesha in Nattai. Several interesting pieces followed, and I was particularly glad to hear Tyagaraja's EVARANI, in DEVAMRITHAVARSHINI. It is a lovely piece that, perhaps for reasons of timing, was taken rather too fast; it needs to be sung with tenderness and bhakti.

There followed another Tyagaraja Kirtana: SIVA SIVA SIVA, in PANTHUVARALI, which was very well suited to Sai's style. Her melodious voice is reminiscent of the late N.C. Vasantakokilam in her youth, and Sai could well progress to such eminence. Another highlight was her rendering PAAPANASAM SIVAMS SANKARABHARANAM piece, MAHALAKSHMI, set in MISRACHAPU tala. Herein, Sai displayed her truly fantastic grasps of tala, especially in her KALPANASVARAS. Memorable too was her singing of Tyagarajas NAGUMOMU a lovely ABERI piece that, interestingly, she kept to MADHYAKALA adi, rather than VILAMBITA.

There ensued her Ragam, Thanam and Pallavi, for which she chose a splendid Raga, SIMENDRAMATHIMUM. Her rendering was successful in all three stages, particularly in the Thanam, and, once again her sense of tala was amply deployed in the Pallavi, particularly in its later stages, and in the SVARAS. There followed a selection of lighter pieces, before the Thillana, and finally the Mangalam.

Sai convinced us that she has already achieved much in a relatively short space of time in singing, and that she will go far. Her wide ranging mind, reflected not only in her studies, but in her dance expertise and her interest in Western music will greatly help her. We thank her, and her devoted parents and Guru.

Dr. John R. Marr.

Wins University Award

Dr. Dante Thurairatnam, Associate Dean and Director of Off-Campus Programmes, Bowling Green State University, Ohio, USA and formerly of Jaffna College, Vaddukoddai, Sri Lanka was the recipient of this year's Michael R. Ferrari Award, the university's highest recognition for any administrator.

Created in 1982 to honour a University administrator who shows a caring attitude in working with faculty, staff and students and who makes outstanding contributions to the University community, the Ferrari Award honours a long time Bowling Green administrator, Dr. Michael Ferrari.

Dr. Thurairatnam has served on numerous committees within the continuing education and summer programmes area as well as in the College of Education and Allied Professions.

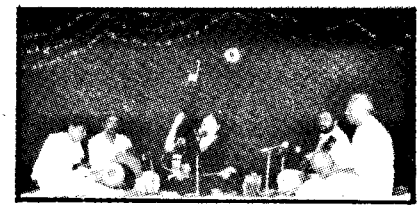
As Director of Off-Campus Programmes, Dr. Thurairatnam is responsible for extending the University's educational services to non-traditional students and various professional groups throughout a 25-county service in Northwest Ohio. In nominating him for this award, Dr. Thurairatnam was described as loyal, dedicated, efficient and intelligent. Thanking the authorities for this honour, Dr. Thurairatnam said that to be recognised by peers and colleagues is something very precious to him.

Mr. Thurairatnam is the son of the late K.C. Thurairatnam and Mrs. Thurairatnam of Kopay and a son-in-law of Mr. and Mrs. Doulatram of Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Centurians – Canadian Junior Champs 1991

The Toronto Tamil Sports Club popularly known as the Centurians, captained by Rajshankar Antonypillai were the champions in the Inter Club Junior Cricket Tourney organised by the Toronto & District Cricket Association. In the finals they defeated Victoria Park A which included 5 Canadian caps.

Mirudangam Arangetram in Oman



It was a proud day for the Sri Lankans in the Sultanate of Oman when fifteen-year-old **Nagulan Nesiah,** *son of Lanka and Malathi Nesiah, had his Mirudangam Arangetram at the Darsait Temple Hall on 25th July 1991. A packed house of several nationalities were enthralled at the high standard of excellence reached at this first ever arangetram in Oman.*

Nagulan had shown great enthusiasm for mirudangam at the tender age of seven. After early training in Sri Lanka, he came under the tutelage of the mirudangam maestro Yalpanam Sri A. Santhanakrishnan when he came over to Oman at the age of 11. With four years of intensive training under the expert hands of Vidwan Santhanakrishnan, Nagulan has reached a very high standard as was shown at the arangetram.

The evening's programme started with a varnam in Raga Begadai which was rendered well in both the Kalas; this was followed by Parthasarathi Iyenger's Sithi Vinayaka in Nattai. The next piece 'Kantha Unnai' in Saramati revealed the artiste's control of Kalapramanam. Adamodi in Sarukesi was noted for its fine Raga expression and sparkling Swaraprasthava. The final korvai in Kalyani Raga Aadi Nadu piece was very much appreciated by the audience.

The Ragam, Thanam, Pallavi in Ranjini set to Misra Chapu Thala was the most complicated piece of the evening but was rendered with great competence. Intricate patterns of Jathis and Korvais were delightfully played during their Thani Avarthanam. The recital concluded with some Thukkadas and Thillanas in Kamas and Mangalam.

His Excellency, Nimal Wijayaratne, Sri Lanka's Ambassador to Oman, paid a tribute to the young artiste and his guru for an excellent performance and for keeping alive this tradition in the fine arts. The artiste certainly did Sri Lanka proud by his expert performance before a multi-national, appreciative audience.

The other artistes who participated in the programme were Padmini Ravi Jayaram (vocal), his guru A. Santhanakrishnan (kanjeera), R.S. Krishnan (violin), S. Navaratnarajah (Ghatam) and Janaki Venkatasubramaniam (Thambura).

S.M. Vivegananthan.

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